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THE WORKS OF HORACE

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What practice, howsoe'er expert,  
In fitting aptest words to things ;  
Or voice, the richest-toned that sings,  
Hath power to give thee as thou wert ?

—TENNYSON.



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THE

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WORKS OF HORACE

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

WITH

A LIFE AND NOTES

BY

SIR THEODORE MARTIN, K.C.B.

IN TWO VOLUMES

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LIFE OF HORACE

QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS.

**Born**—8 DEC., A.U.C. 689, B.C. 65.

**Died**—27 NOV., A.U.C. 746, B.C. 8.

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# LIFE OF HORACE.

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## CHAPTER I.

BIRTH.—EDUCATION.—CAMPAIGN WITH BRUTUS  
AND CASSIUS.

**L**IKE the two greatest lyrists of modern times, Burns and Béranger, Horace sprang from the ranks of the people. His father had been a slave, and he was himself cradled among “the huts where poor men lie.” Like these great lyrists, too, Horace was proud of his origin. After he had become the intimate associate of the first men in Rome—nay, the bosom friend of the generals and statesmen who ruled the world—he was at pains on more occasions than one to call attention to the fact of his humble birth, and to let it be known that, had he to begin life anew, he was so far from desiring a better ancestry that he would, like Andrew Marvell, have made “his destiny his choice.” Nor is this done with the pretentious affectation of the parvenu, eager to bring

under notice the contrast between what he is and what he has been, and to insinuate his personal deserts, while pretending to disclaim them. Horace has no such false humility. He was proud, and he makes no secret that he was so, of the name he had made,—proud of it for himself and for the class from which he had sprung. But it was his practice, as well as his settled creed, to rate at little the accidents of birth and fortune. A stronger and higher feeling, however, more probably dictated the avowal,—gratitude to that slave-born father whose character and careful training had stamped an abiding influence upon the life and genius of his son. Neither might he have been unwilling in this way quietly to protest against the worship of rank and wealth which he saw everywhere around him, and which was demoralising society in Rome. The favourite of the Emperor, the companion of Mæcenas, did not himself forget, neither would he let others forget, that he was a freed-man's son; and in his own way was glad to declare, as Béranger did of himself at the height of his fame—

"Je suis vilain, et très vilain."

The Roman poets of the pre-Augustan and Augustan periods, unlike Horace, were all well born. Catullus and Calvus, his great predecessors in lyric poetry, were men of old and noble family. Virgil, born five years before Horace, came nearer than either of these to Horace in social rank. But although his father had begun life in a humble employment, and owed, like Horace's father, his rise in life to his own industry, and, like him, had invested his savings in the purchase of a small landed property, he had not risen from a servile

position. Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, who were respectively six, fourteen, and twenty years Horace's juniors, were all of equestrian rank. Horace's father was a freedman of the town of Venusia, the modern Venosa. It is supposed that he had been a *publicus servus*, or slave of the community, and took his distinctive name from the Horatian tribe, to which the community belonged. He had saved a moderate competency in the vocation of *coactor*, a name applied both to the collectors of public revenue and of money at sales by public auction. To which of these classes he belonged is uncertain—most probably to the latter; and in those days of frequent confiscations, when property was constantly changing hands, the profits of his calling, at best a poor one, may have been unusually large.

With the fruits of his industry he had purchased a small farm near Venusia, upon the banks of the Aufidus, the modern Ofanto, on the confines of Lucania and Apulia. Here, on the 8th of December, B.C. 65, the poet was born; and this picturesque region of mountain, forest, and river, "meet nurse of a poetic child," impressed itself indelibly on his memory, and imbued him with the love of nature, especially in her rugged aspect, which remained with him through life. He appears to have left the locality in early life, and he nowhere mentions that he visited it; but when he has occasion to describe its features (Odes, III. 4), he does this with a sharpness and truth of touch, which show how closely he had even then begun to observe. Acherontia, perched nest-like among the rocks, the Bantine thickets, the fat meadows of low-lying Forentum, which his boyish eye

had noted, attest to this hour the vivid accuracy of his description. The passage in question records an interesting incident in the poet's childhood. Escaping from his nurse, he has rambled away from the little cottage on the slopes of Mount Vultur, whither he had probably been taken from the sultry Venusia to pass his *villeggiatura* during the heat of summer, and is found asleep, covered with fresh myrtle and laurel leaves, in which the wood-pigeons have swathed him.

“ When from my nurse erewhile, on Vultur's steep,  
I strayed beyond the bound  
Of our small homestead's ground,<sup>1</sup>  
Was I, fatigued with play, beneath a heap  
Of fresh leaves sleeping found,—

Strewn by the storied doves ; and wonder fell  
On all, their nest who keep  
On Acherontia's steep,  
Or in Forentum's low rich pastures dwell,  
Or Bantine woodlands deep,

<sup>1</sup> In translating this passage I have adopted the reading “*Villulæ*,” in preference to the obviously unsatisfactory “*Apuliæ*” of ordinary texts. This reading is rejected by Mr Munro, on the ground that Horace is averse to the use of diminutives. But he has “*parmula*,” and in the passage in question the diminutive has its force. I cannot better express my own views than in the words of my friend, the late W. G. Clark, of Cambridge, who long ago conjectured that the line should be read—

“*Altricis extra limina Villulæ.*”

“It would have been claiming for himself a luxurious bringing up to have said ‘*Villa*.’ ‘*Villula*’ is the little country cottage on the mountain-side, where the boy was sent from the sultry Venusia, to pass his *villeggiatura* during the summer months. Does not this add to the picture and give force to the illustration? A child wanders from the cottage door, but he would scarcely be said to wander into a neighbouring province, nor does it matter whether he fell asleep in Apulia or Lucania.”

That safe from bears and adders in such place  
I lay, and slumbering smiled,  
O'erstrewn with myrtle wild,  
And laurel, by the god's peculiar grace  
No craven-hearted child."

The incident thus recorded is not necessarily discredited by the circumstance of its being closely akin to what is told by Ælian (B. xii. c. xlv.) of Pindar, that a swarm of bees settled upon his lips, and fed him with honey, when he was left exposed upon the highway. It probably had some foundation in fact, whatever may be thought of the implied augury of the special favour of the gods which is said to have been drawn from it at the time. In any case, the picture of the strayed child, sleeping unconscious of its danger, with its hands full of wild-flowers, is pleasant to contemplate.

In his father's house, and in those of the Apulian peasantry around him, Horace became familiar with the simple virtues of the poor, their industry and independence, their integrity, chastity, and self-denial, which he loved to contrast in after-years with the luxury and vice of imperial Rome.<sup>1</sup>

His mother he would seem to have lost early. No mention of her occurs, directly or indirectly, throughout

<sup>1</sup> In speaking of Virgil's youth, Professor Sellar ('The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age: ' Oxford, 1877, p. 110) confirms this view. "Virgil and Horace," he says, "after living in the most refined society in Rome, are entirely at one in their appreciation of the qualities of the old Italian husbandmen or small landowners,—a class long before their time reduced in numbers and influence, but still producing men of modest worth and strong common-sense, like the "abnormis sapiens" of the Satires, and like those country neighbours whose lively talk and homely wisdom Horace contrasts with the fashionable folly of Rome;

his poems; and remarkable as Horace is for the warmth of his affections, this could scarcely have happened had she not died when he was very young. He appears also to have been an only child. This doubtless drew him closer to his father, and the want of the early influences of mother or sister may serve to explain why one misses in his poetry something of that gracious tenderness towards womanhood, which, looking to the sweet and loving disposition of the man, one might otherwise have expected to find in it.

That he was no common boy we may be very sure, even if this were not manifest from the fact that his father resolved to give him a higher education than was to be obtained under a provincial schoolmaster. With this view, although little able to afford the expense, he took his son, when about twelve years old, to Rome, and gave him the best education the capital could supply. No money was spared to enable him to keep his position among his fellow-scholars of the higher ranks. He was waited on by several slaves, as though he were the heir to a considerable fortune. At the same time, however,

and true and virtuous women, such as may have suggested to the one poet the lines—

‘Quod si pudica mulier in partem juvet  
Domum atque dulces liberos,  
Sabina qualis aut perusta solibus  
Pernicis uxor Apuli;’

and to the other—

‘Interea longum cantu solata laborem  
Arguto conjux percurrit pectine telas.’

“These poets themselves probably owe that stronger grain of character, their large share of the old Italian seriousness of spirit (*gravitas*), which distinguishes them from the other poets of their time, to the traditions of virtue which the men of this class had not yet unlearned.”

he was not allowed either to feel any shame for his own order, or to aspire to a position which his patrimony was unable to maintain. His father taught him to look forward to some situation akin to that in which his own modest competency had been acquired; and to feel that, in any sphere, culture, self-respect, and prudent self-control must command influence, and afford the best guarantee for happiness. In reading this part of Horace's story, as he tells it himself, one is reminded of Burns's early lines about his father and himself:—

“ My father was a farmer upon the Carrick border,  
And carefully he bred me up in decency and order.  
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a farthing,  
For without an honest manly heart no man was worth regarding.”

The parallel might be still further pursued. “ My father,” says Gilbert Burns, “ was for some time almost the only companion we had. He conversed familiarly on all subjects with us as if we had been men, and was at great pains, while we accompanied him in the labours of the farm, to lead the conversation to such subjects as might tend to increase our knowledge, or confirm us in virtuous habits.” How closely this resembles the method adopted with Horace by his father will be seen hereafter.<sup>1</sup>

Horace's literary master at Rome was Orbilius Pupilus, a grammarian, who had carried into his school his martinet habits as an old soldier; and who, thanks to

<sup>1</sup> Compare it, too, with what Horace reports of

“ Ofellus the hind,  
Though no scholar, a sage of exceptional kind,”

in the Second Satire of the Second Book, from line 114 to the end.

Horace, has become a name (*plagosus Orbilius*, Orbilius of the birch) eagerly applied by many a suffering urchin to modern pedagogues who have resorted to the same material means of inculcating the beauties of the classics. By this Busby of the period Horace was grounded in Greek, and made familiar, too familiar for his liking, with Ennius, Nævius, Pacuvius, Attius, Livius Andronicus, and other early Latin writers, whose unpruned vigour was distasteful to one who had already begun to appreciate the purer and not less vigorous style of Homer and other Greek authors. Horace's father took care that he should acquire all the accomplishments of a Roman gentleman, in which music and rhetoric were, as a matter of course, included. But, what was of still more importance during this critical period of the future poet's first introduction to the seductions of the capital, he enjoyed the advantages of his father's personal superintendence and of a careful moral training. His father went with him to all his classes, and, being himself a man of shrewd observation and natural humour, he gave the boy's studies a practical bearing by directing his attention to the follies and vices of the luxurious and dissolute society around him, showing him how incompatible they were with the dictates of reason and common-sense, and how disastrous in their consequences to the good name and happiness of those who yielded to their seductions. The method he pursued is thus described by Horace (*Satires*, I. 4)—

“ Should then my humorous vein run wild, some latitude allow.  
I learned the habit from the best of fathers, who employed  
Some living type to stamp the vice he wished me to avoid.  
Thus temperate and frugal when exhorting me to be,  
And with the competence content which he had stored for me,



'Look, boy!' he'd say, 'at Albius' son—observe his sorry plight!  
And Barrus, that poor beggar there! Say, are not these a sight,  
To warn a man from squandering his patrimonial means?'  
When counselling me to keep from vile amours with common queans;  
'Sectanus, ape him not!' he'd say; or, urging to forswear  
Intrigue with matrons, when I might taste lawful joys elsewhere;  
'Trebonius' fame is blurred since he was in the manner caught.  
The reasons why this should be shunned, and why that should be  
sought,  
The sages will explain; enough for me, if I uphold  
The faith and morals handed down from our good sires of old,  
And, while you need a guardian, keep your life pure and your name.  
When years have hardened, as they will, your judgment and your frame,  
You'll swim without a float!' And so, with talk like this, he won  
And moulded me, while yet a boy. Was something to be done,  
Hard it might be—'For this,' he'd say, 'good warrant you can quote'—  
And then as model pointed to some public man of note.  
Or was there something to be shunned, then he would urge, 'Can you  
One moment doubt that acts like these are base and futile too,  
Which have to him and him such dire disgrace and trouble bred?'  
And as a neighbour's death appals the sick, and, by the dread  
Of dying, forces them to put upon their lusts restraint,  
So tender minds are oft deterred from vices by the taint  
They see them bring on others' names; 'tis thus that I from those  
Am all exempt, which bring with them a train of shames and woes."

Nor did Horace only inherit from his father, as he himself says, the kindly humour and practical good sense which distinguish his satirical and didactic writings, and that manly independence which he preserved through the temptations of a difficult career. Many of "the rugged maxims hewn from life" with which his works abound are manifestly but echoes of what the poet had heard from his father's lips. Like his own Ofellus, and the elders of the race—not, let us hope, altogether bygone—of peasant-farmers in Scotland, described by Wordsworth as "religious men, who give to God and men their dues,"—the Apulian freedman had a fund

of homely wisdom at command, not gathered from books, but instinct with the freshness and force of direct observation and personal conviction. The following exquisite tribute by Horace to his worth is conclusive evidence how often and how deeply he had occasion to be grateful, not only for the affectionate care of this admirable father, but also for the bias and strength which that father's character had given to his own. It has a further interest, as occurring in a poem (Satires, I. 6) addressed to Mæcenas, a man of ancient family and vast wealth in the early days of that acquaintance with the poet which was afterwards to ripen into a life-long friendship.

“ Yet if some trivial faults, and these but few,  
 My nature, else not much amiss, imbue  
 (Just as you wish away, yet scarcely blame,  
 A mole or two upon a comely frame),  
 If no man may arraign me of the vice  
 Of lewdness, meanness, nor of avarice ;  
 If pure and innocent I live, and dear  
 To those I love (self-praise is venial here),  
 All this I owe my father, who, though poor,  
 Lord of some few lean acres, and no more,  
 Was loath to send me to the village school,  
 Whereto the sons of men of mark and rule,—  
 Centurions, and the like,—were wont to swarm,  
 With slate and satchel on sinister arm,  
 And the poor dole of scanty pence to pay  
 The starveling teacher on the quarter-day ;  
 But boldly took me, when a boy, to Rome,  
 There to be taught all arts that grace the home  
 Of knight and senator. To see my dress,  
 And slaves attending, you'd have thought, no less  
 Than patrimonial fortunes old and great  
 Had furnished forth the charges of my state.  
 When with my tutors, he would still be by,  
 Nor ever let me wander from his eye ;

And, in a word, he kept me chaste (and this  
Is virtue's crown) from all that was amiss,  
Nor such in act alone, but in repute,  
Till even scandal's tattling voice was mute.

No dread had he that men might taunt or jeer,  
Should I, some future day, as auctioneer,  
Or, like himself, as tax-collector, seek  
With petty fees my humble means to eke.  
Nor should I then have murmured. Now I know,  
More earnest thanks, and loftier praise I owe.  
Reason must fail me, ere I cease to own  
With pride, that I have such a father known ;<sup>1</sup>  
Nor shall I stoop my birth to vindicate,  
By charging, like the herd, the wrong on Fate,  
That I was not of noble lineage sprung :  
Far other creed inspires my heart and tongue.  
For now should nature bid all living men  
Retrace their years, and live them o'er again,  
Each culling, as his inclination bent,  
His parents for himself, with mine content,  
I would not choose whom men endow as great  
With the insignia and seats of state ;  
And, though I seemed insane to vulgar eyes,  
Thou wouldst perchance esteem me truly wise,  
In thus refusing to assume the care  
Of irksome state I was unused to bear."

The education of which Horace's father had laid the foundation at Rome, would not have been complete without a course of study at Athens, then the capital of literature and philosophy, as Rome was of political power. Thither Horace went somewhere between the

<sup>1</sup> Many are the fathers who deserve no less a tribute, though the world hears nothing of them. How welcome such tributes are, when they are paid by great men—as, for example, in such words as those in which Carlyle speaks of his father ! "Ought I not to rejoice that God was pleased to give me such a father ; that from earliest years I had the example of a real man of God's own making continually before me ? Let me learn of *him*. Let me write my books, as he built his houses, and walk as blamelessly through this shadow world ; if God so will to rejoin him at last."—'Reminiscences,' vol. i. p. 15.

age of seventeen and twenty. "At Rome," he says (Epistles, II. ii. 32)—

"I was brought up, and there was taught,  
What ills to Greece Achilles' anger wrought.  
Then Athens bettered that dear lore of song ;  
She taught me to distinguish right from wrong,  
And in the groves of Academe to sound  
The way to truth, if so she might be found."

At Athens he found many young men of the leading Roman families — Bibulus, Messalla, Corvinus, the younger Cicero, and others—engaged in the same pursuits with himself, and he contracted among them many enduring friendships. In the political lull which ensued between the battle of Pharsalia (B.C. 48) and the death of Julius Cæsar (B.C. 44), he was enabled to devote himself without interruption to the studies which had drawn him to that home of literature and the arts. But these were destined before long to be rudely broken. The tidings of that startling event had been hailed with delight by the youthful spirits, some of whom saw in the downfall of the great Dictator the dawn of a new era of liberty, while others hoped from it the return to power of the aristocratic party to which they belonged. In this mood Brutus found them when he arrived in Athens along with Cassius, on their way to take command of the Eastern provinces which had been assigned to them by the Senate. Cassius hurried on to his post in Syria, but Brutus lingered behind, ostensibly absorbed in the philosophical studies of the schools, but at the same time recruiting a staff of officers for his army from among the young Romans of wealth and family whom it was important he should attach to his party, and who

were all eagerness to make his cause their own. Horace, infected by the general enthusiasm, joined his standard; and, though then only twenty-two, without experience, and with no special aptitude, physical or mental, for a military life, he was intrusted by Brutus with the command of a legion.<sup>1</sup> There is no reason to suppose that he owed a command of such importance to any dearth of men of good family qualified to act as officers. It is, therefore, only reasonable to conclude, that even at this early period he was recognised in the brilliant society around him as a man of mark; and that Brutus, before selecting him, had thoroughly satisfied himself that he possessed qualities which justified so great a deviation from ordinary rules, as the commission of so responsible a charge to a freedman's son. That Horace gave his commander satisfaction we know from himself. The line (Epistles, I. xx. 23), "*Me primis urbis belli placuisse domique,*"—

" In war, as also here at home,  
I stood well with the foremost men of Rome,"

can be read in no other sense. But while Horace had, beyond all doubt, made himself a strong party of friends who could appreciate his genius and attractive qualities, his appointment as military tribune excited jealousy among some of his brother officers, who considered that the command of a Roman legion should have been re-

<sup>1</sup> A legion was composed of 6000 men. Over each legion were six tribunes. Exception has been taken to the statement in the text by some critics who think that Horace's command was merely nominal. Had it been so, Horace would have been very unlikely to have called attention, as he does, in the Sixth Satire of the First Book, to the fact that he had been intrusted with a merely nominal command.

served for men of nobler blood—a jealousy at which he said, with his usual modesty, many years afterwards (Satires, I. vi. 45), he had no reason either to be surprised or to complain.

In B.C. 43, Brutus, with his army, passed from Macedonia to join Cassius in Asia Minor, and Horace took his part in their subsequent active and brilliant campaign there. Of this we get some slight incidental glimpses in his works. Thus, for example (Odes, II. 7), we find him reminding his comrade, Pompeius Varus, how

“ Full oft they sped the lingering day  
Quaffing bright wine, as in our tents we lay,  
With Syrian spikenard on our glistening hair.”

The Syrian spikenard, *Malobathrum Syrium*, fixes the locality. Again, in the epistle to his friend Bullatius (Epistles, I. 11), who is making a tour in Asia, Horace speaks of several places as if from vivid recollection. In his usual dramatic manner, he makes Bullatius answer his inquiries as to how he likes the place he has seen:—

“ You know what Lebedos is like; so bare,  
With Gabii or Fidenæ ’twould compare;  
Yet there, methinks, I would accept my lot,  
My friends forgetting, by my friends forgot,  
Stand on the cliff at distance, and survey  
The stormy sea-god’s wild Titanic play.”—(Conington.)

Horace himself had manifestly watched the angry surges from the cliffs of Lebedos. But a more interesting record of the Asiatic campaign, inasmuch as it is probably the earliest specimen of Horace’s writing which we have, occurs in the Seventh Satire of the First Book.

Persius, a rich trader of Clazomene, has a lawsuit with Rupilius, one of Brutus's officers, who went by the nickname of "King." Brutus, in his character of quæstor, has to decide the dispute, which in the hands of the principals degenerates, as disputes so conducted generally do, into a personal squabble. Persius leads off with some oriental flattery of the general and his suite. Brutus is "Asia's sun," and they the "propitious stars," all but Rupilius, who was

" That pest,  
The Dog, whom husbandmen detest."

Rupilius, an old hand at slang, replies with a volley of rough sarcasms, "such as among the vineyards fly," and

" Would make the passer-by  
Shout filthy names, but shouting fly"—

a description of vintage slang which is as true to-day as it was then. The conclusion is curious, as a punning allusion to the hereditary fame of Brutus as a puller-down of kings, which it must have required some courage to publish, when Augustus was omnipotent in Rome.

" But Grecian Persius, after he  
Had been besprinkled plenteously  
With gall Italic, cries, 'By all  
The gods above, on thee I call,  
O Brutus, thou of old renown,  
For putting kings completely down,  
To save us! Wherefore do you not  
Despatch this King here on the spot?  
One of the tasks is this, believe,  
Which you are destined to achieve!'"

This is just such a squib as a young fellow might be

expected to dash off for the amusement of his brother officers, while the incident which led to it was yet fresh in their minds. Slight as it is, one feels sure its preservation by so severe a critic of his own writings as Horace was due to some charm of association, or possibly to the fact that in it he had made his first essay in satire.

The defeat of Brutus at Philippi (B.C. 42) brought Horace's military career to a close. Even before this decisive event, his dream of the re-establishment of liberty and the old Roman constitution had probably begun to fade away, under his actual experience of the true aims and motives of the mass of those whom Brutus and Cassius had hitherto been leading to victory, and satiating with plunder. Young aristocrats, who sneered at the freedman's son, were not likely to found any system of liberty worthy of the name, or to use success for nobler purposes than those of selfish ambition. Fighting was not Horace's vocation; and with the death of Brutus and those nobler spirits who fell at Philippi rather than survive their hopes of freedom, his motive for fighting was at an end. To prolong a contest which its leaders had surrendered in despair was hopeless. He did not, therefore, like Pompeius Varus and others of his friends, join the party which, for a time, protracted the struggle under the younger Pompey. But, like his great leader, he had fought for a principle; nor could he have regarded otherwise than with horror the men who had overthrown Brutus, reeking as they were with the blood of a thousand proscriptions, and reckless as they had shown themselves of every civil right and social obliga-



tion. As little, therefore, was he inclined to follow the example of others of his distinguished friends and companions in arms, such as Valerius Messalla and Ælius Lamia, who not merely made their peace with Antony and Octavius, but cemented it by taking service in their army.

## CHAPTER II.

RETURNS TO ROME AFTER BATTLE OF PHILIPPI.—  
EARLY POEMS.

AVAILING himself of the amnesty proclaimed by the conquerors, Horace found his way back to Rome. His father was dead; how long before is not known. If the little property at Venusia had remained unsold, it was of course confiscated. When the lands of men, like Virgil, who had taken no active part in the political conflicts of the day, were being seized to satisfy the rapacity of a mercenary soldiery, Horace's paternal acres were not likely to escape. In Rome he found himself penniless. How to live was the question; and, fortunately for literature, "chill penury" did not repress, but, on the contrary, stimulated his "noble rage."

"Bated in spirit, and with pinions clipped,  
Of all the means my father left me stripped,  
Want stared me in the face, so then and there  
I took to scribbling verse in sheer despair."—(Ep. ii. 2.)

Despoiled of his means, and smarting with defeat, Horace was just in the state of mind to strike vigorously at men and manners which he did not like. Young, ardent, constitutionally hot in temper, eager to assert, amid the

general chaos of morals public and private, the higher principles of the philosophic schools from which he had so recently come, irritated by the thousand mortifications to which a man of cultivated tastes and keenly alive to beauty is exposed in a luxurious city, where the prizes he values most are carried off, yet scarcely valued, by the wealthy vulgar, he was especially open to the besetting temptation of clever young men to write satire, and to write it in a merciless spirit. As he says of himself (Odes, I. 16)—

“ In youth’s pleasant spring-time,  
The shafts of my passion at random I flung,  
And dashing headlong into petulant rhyme,  
I recked neither where nor how fiercely I stung.”

Youth is always intolerant, and it is so easy to be severe; so seductive to say brilliant things, whether they be true or not. But there came a day, and it came soon, when Horace saw that triumphs gained in this way were of little value, and when he was anxious that his friends should join with him in consigning his smart and scurrile lines (*celeris et criminosos Iambos*) to oblivion. The *amende* for some early lampoon which he makes in the Ode just quoted, though ostensibly addressed to a lady who had been its victim, was probably intended to cover a wider field.

Personal satire is always popular, but the fame it begets is bought dearly at the cost of life-long enmities and many after-regrets. That Horace in his early writings was personal and abusive is very clear, both from his own language and from a few of the poems of this class and period which survive. Some of these have no value,

except as showing how badly even Horace could write, and how sedulously the better feeling and better taste of his riper years led him to avoid that most worthless form of satire which attacks where rejoinder is impossible, and irritates the temper but cannot possibly amend the heart. In others, the lash is applied with no less justice than vigour, as in the following invective, the fourth of the Epodes :—

“ Such hate as nature meant to be  
 ’Twixt lamb and wolf I feel for thee,  
 Whose hide by Spanish scourge is tanned,  
 And legs still bear the fetter’s brand !  
 Though of your gold you strut so vain,  
 Wealth cannot change the knave in grain.  
 How ! see you not, when striding down  
 The Via Sacra<sup>1</sup> in your gown  
 Good six ells wide, the passers there  
 Turn on you with indignant stare ?  
 ‘ This wretch,’ such gibes your ear invade,  
 ‘ By the Triumvirs’<sup>2</sup> scourges flayed,  
 Till even the crier shirked his toil,  
 Some thousand acres ploughs of soil  
 Falernian, and with his nags  
 Wears out the Appian highway’s flags ;  
 Nay, on the foremost seats, despite  
 Of Otho, sits and apes the knight.  
 What boots it to déspatch a fleet  
 So large, so heavy, so complete,  
 Against a gang of rascal knaves,  
 Thieves, corsairs, buccaneers, and slaves,  
 If villain of such vulgar breed  
 Is in the foremost rank to lead ? ’ ”

Modern critics may differ as to whom this bitter in-

<sup>1</sup> The Sacred Way, leading to the Capitol, a favourite lounge.

<sup>2</sup> When a slave was being scourged, under the orders of the Triumviri Capitales, a public crier stood by, and proclaimed the nature of his crime.

vective was aimed at, but there could have been no doubt on that subject in Rome at the time. And if, as there is every reason to conclude, it was levelled at Sextus Menas, the lines, when first shown about among Horace's friends, must have told with great effect, and they were likely to be remembered long after the infamous career of this double-dyed traitor had come to a close. Menas was a freedman of Pompey the Great, and a trusted officer of his son Sextus.<sup>1</sup> He had recently (B.C. 38) carried over with him to Augustus a portion of Pompey's fleet which was under his command, and betrayed into his hands the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. For this act of treachery he was loaded with wealth and honours; and when Augustus, next year, fitted out a naval expedition against Sextus Pompeius, Menas received a command. It was probably lucky for Horace that this swaggering upstart, who was not likely to be scrupulous as to his means of revenge, went over the very next year to his former master, whom he again abandoned within a year to sell himself once more to Augustus. That astute politician put it out of his power to play further tricks with the fleet, by giving him a command in Pannonia, where he was killed, B.C. 36, at the siege of Siscia, the modern Sissek.

Though Horace was probably best known in Rome in these early days as a writer of lampoons and satirical poems, in which the bitterness of his models Archilochus and Lucilius was aimed at, not very successfully

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare has introduced him in "Antony and Cleopatra," along with Menecrates and Varrius, as "friends to Sextus Pompeius."

—for bitterness and personal rancour were not natural to the man—he showed in other compositions signs of the true poetic spirit, which afterwards found expression in the consummate grace and finish of his Odes. To this class belongs the 16th Epode, which, from internal evidence, appears to have been written B.C. 40, when the state of Italy, convulsed by civil war, was well calculated to fill him with despair. Horace had frequent occasion between this period and the battle of Actium, when the defeat and death of Antony closed the long struggle for supremacy between him and Octavius, to appeal to his countrymen against the waste of the best blood of Italy in civil fray, which might have been better spent in subduing a foreign foe, and spreading the lustre of the Roman arms. But if we are to suppose this poem written when the tidings of the bloody incidents of the Perusian campaign had arrived in Rome,—the reduction of the town of Perugia by famine, and the massacre of from two to three hundred prisoners, almost all of equestrian or senatorial rank,—we can well understand the strong feeling by which it is pervaded.

TO THE ROMAN PEOPLE.

“ Another age in civil wars will soon be spent and worn.  
 And by her native strength our Rome be wrecked and overborne,  
 That Rome, the Marsians could not crush, who border on our lands,  
 Nor the shock of threatening Porsena with his Etruscan bands,  
 Nor Capua's strength that rivalled ours, nor Spartacus the stern,  
 Nor the faithless Allobrogian, who still for change doth yearn.  
 Ay, what Germania's blue-eyed youth quelled not with ruthless sword,  
 Nor Hannibal by our great sires detested and abhorred,  
 We shall destroy with impious hands imbrued in brother's gore,  
 And wild beasts of the wood shall range our native land once more.  
 A foreign foe, alas ! shall tread The City's ashes down,  
 And his horse's ringing hoofs shall smite her places of renown,

And the bones of great Quirinus, now religiously enshrined,  
Shall be flung by sacrilegious hands to the sunshine and the wind.

"And if ye all from ills so dire ask how yourselves to free,  
Or such at least as would not hold your lives unworthily,  
No better counsel can I urge, than that which erst inspired  
The stout Phocæans when from their doomed city they retired,  
Their fields, their household gods, their shrines surrendering as a prey  
To the wild boar and the ravening wolf ; so we, in our dismay,  
Where'er our wandering steps may chance to carry us should go,  
Or wheresoe'er across the seas the fitful winds may blow.

"How think ye then? If better course none offer, why should we  
Not seize the happy auspices, and boldly put to sea?  
But let us swear this oath ;—' Whene'er, if e'er shall come the time,  
Rocks upwards from the deep shall float, return shall not be crime ;  
Nor we be loath to back our sails, the ports of home to seek,  
When the waters of the Po shall lave Matinum's rifted peak.  
Or skyey Apenninus down into the sea be rolled,  
Or wild unnatural desires such monstrous revel hold,  
That in the stag's endearments the tigress shall delight,  
And the turtle-dove adulterate with the falcon and the kite,  
That unsuspecting herds no more shall tawny lions fear,  
And the he-goat, smoothly sleek of skin, through the briny deep  
career !'

This having sworn, and what beside may our returning stay,  
Straight let us all, this City's doomed inhabitants, away,  
Or those that rise above the herd, the few of nobler soul ;  
The craven and the hopeless here on their ill-starred beds may loll.  
Ye who can feel and act like men, this woman's wail give o'er,  
And fly to regions far away beyond the Etruscan shore !  
The circling ocean waits us ; then away, where nature smiles,  
To those fair lands, those blissful lands, the rich and happy Isles !  
Where Ceres year by year crowns all the untilled land with sheaves,  
And the vine with purple clusters droops, unpruned of all her leaves ;  
Where the olive buds and burgeons, to its promise ne'er untrue,  
And the russet fig adorns the tree, that graffshoot never knew ;  
Where honey from the hollow oaks doth ooze, and crystal rills  
Come dancing down with tinkling feet from the sky-dividing hills ;  
There to the pails the she-goats come, without a master's word,  
And home with udders brimming broad returns the friendly herd.  
There round the fold no surly bear its midnight prow doth make,  
Nor teems the rank and heaving soil with the adder and the snake ;  
There no contagion smites the flocks, nor blight of any star  
With fury of remorseless heat the sweltering herds doth mar.

“ Nor this the only bliss that waits us there, where drenching rains  
 By watery Eurus swept along ne'er devastate the plains,  
 Nor are the swelling seeds burnt up within the thirsty clods,  
 So kindly blends the seasons there the King of all the Gods.  
 That shore the Argonautic bark's stout rowers never gained,  
 Nor the wily she of Colchis with step unchaste profaned ;  
 The sails of Sidon's galleys ne'er were wafted to that strand,  
 Nor ever rested on its slopes Ulysses' toilworn band :  
 For Jupiter, when he with brass the Golden Age alloyed,  
 That blissful region set apart by the good to be enjoyed ;  
 With brass and then with iron he the ages seared, but ye,  
 Good men and true, to that bright home arise and follow me !”

This poem, Lord Lytton has truly said, “ has the character of youth in its defects and its beauties. The redundance of its descriptive passages is in marked contrast to the terseness of description which Horace studies in his Odes ; and there is something declamatory in its general tone which is at variance with the simpler utterance of lyrical art. On the other hand, it has all the warmth of genuine passion, and in sheer vigour of composition Horace has rarely excelled it.”

To the same class of Horace's early poems, though probably a few years later in date, belongs his celebrated eulogium of a country life and its innocent enjoyments (Epode 2), the leading idea of which was embodied by Pope in the familiar lines, wonderful for finish as the production of a boy of eleven, beginning

“ Happy the man whose wish and care  
 A few paternal acres bound.”

With characteristic irony Horace puts his fancies into the mouth of Alphius, a miserly money-lender. No one yearns so keenly for the country and its imagined peace as the overworked city man, when his pulse is low and his



spirits weary, the natural consequences of bad air and the reaction of over-excitement; no one, as a rule, is more apt to tire of the homely and uneventful life which the country offers, or to find that, for him at least, its quietude does not bring peace. It is not, therefore, at all out of keeping, although critics have taken exception to the poem on this ground, that Horace makes *Alphius* rhapsodise on the charms of a rural life, and having tried them, creep back within the year to his money-bags and his ten per cent. It was, besides, a favourite doctrine with him, which he is constantly enforcing in his later works, that everybody envies his neighbour's pursuits—until he tries them.

In the charming sketch presented in this poem of the peasant's life, it is easy to see that Horace is drawing from nature, like Burns in his more elaborate picture of the "Cottar's Saturday Night." Horace had obviously watched closely the ways of the peasantry round his Apulian home, as he did at a later date those of the Sabine country, and to this we owe many of the most delightful passages in his works. He omits no opportunity of contrasting their purity of morals, and the austere self-denial of their life, with the luxurious habits and reckless vice of the city life of Rome. Thus, in one of the finest of his Odes (Book III. 6), after painting with a few masterly strokes what the matrons and the fast young ladies of the imperial city had become, it was not from such as these, he continues, that the noble youth sprang, "who dyed the seas with Carthaginian gore, overthrew Pyrrhus and great Antiochus and direful Hannibal," concluding in words which contrast by their sug-

gestive terseness at the same time that they invite comparison with the elaborated fulness of the details of rural life contained in the 2d Epode:—

“ But they, of rustic warriors wight  
 The manly offspring, learned to smite  
 The soil with Sabine spade,  
 And fagots they had cut, to bear  
 Home from the forest, whensoe'er  
 An austere mother bade ;  
 What time the sun began to change  
 The shadows through the mountain-range,  
 And took the yoke away  
 From the o'erwearied oxen, and  
 His parting car proclaimed at hand  
 The kindest hour of day.”

Another of Horace's juvenile poems, unique in subject and in treatment (Epode 5), gives evidence of a picturesque power of the highest kind, stimulating the imagination, and swaying it with the feelings of pity and terror in a way to make us regret that he wrote no others in a similar vein. We find ourselves at midnight in the gardens of the sorceress Canidia, whither a boy of good family—his rank being clearly indicated by the reference to his purple *toga* and *bullæ*—has been carried off from his home. His terrified exclamations, with which the poem opens, as Canidia and her three assistants surround him, glaring on him, with looks significant of their deadly purpose, through lurid flames fed with the usual ghastly ingredients of a witch's fire, carry us at once into the horrors of the scene. While one of the hags sprinkles her hell-drops through the adjoining house, another is casting up earth from a pit, in which the boy is presently imbedded to the chin, and killed by a frightful process of

slow torture, in order that a love-philtre of irresistible power may be concocted from his liver and spleen. The time, the place, the actors are brought before us with singular dramatic power. Canidia's burst of wonder and rage that the spells she deemed all-powerful have been counteracted by some sorceress of skill superior to her own, gives great reality to the scene; and the curses of the dying boy, launched with tragic vigour, and closing with a touch of beautiful pathos, bring it to an effective close.

The speculations as to who and what Canidia was, in which scholars have run riot, are conspicuous for absurdity, even among the wild and ridiculous conjectures as to the personages named by Horace in which the commentators have indulged. That some well-known person was the original of Canidia is extremely probable, for professors of witchcraft abounded at the time, combining very frequently, like their modern successors, the arts of Medea with the attributes of Dame Quickly. What more natural than for a young poet to work up an effective picture out of the abundant suggestions which the current stories of such creatures and their doings presented to his hand? The popular belief in their power, the picturesque conditions under which their spells were wrought, the wild passions in which lay the secret of their hold upon the credulity of their victims, offered to the Roman poet, just as they did to our own Elizabethan dramatists, a combination of materials most favourable for poetic treatment. But that Horace had, as many of his critics contend, a feeling of personal vanity, the pique of a discarded lover, to avenge, is an assumption wholly

without warrant. He was the last man, at any time or under any circumstances, to have had any relations of a personal nature with a woman of Canidia's class. However inclined he may have been to use her and her practices for poetic purposes, he manifestly not only saw through the absurdity of her pretensions, but laughed at her miserable impotence, and meant that others should do the same.

It seems to be impossible to read the 8th of his First Book of Satires, and not come to this conclusion. That satire consists of the monologue of a garden god, set up in the garden which Mæcenas had begun to lay out on the Esquiline Hill. This spot had until recently been the burial-ground of the Roman poor, a quarter noisome by day, and the haunt of thieves and beasts of prey by night. On this obscene spot, littered with skulls and dead men's bones, Canidia and her accomplice Sagana are again introduced, digging a pit with their nails, into which they pour the blood of a coal-black ewe, which they had previously torn limb-meal—

“ So to evoke the shade and soul  
Of dead men, and from these to wring  
Responses to their questioning.”

They have with them two effigies, one of wax and the other of wool—the latter the larger of the two, and overbearing the other, which cowers before it—

“ Like one that stands  
Beseeching in the hangman's hands.  
On Hecate one, Tisiphone  
The other calls; and you might see  
Serpents and hell-hounds thread the dark,  
Whilst, these vile orgies not to mark,

The moon, all bloody red of hue,  
Behind the massive tombs withdrew."

The hags pursue their incantations; higher and higher flames their ghastly fire, and the grizzled wolves and spotted snakes slink in terror to their holes, as the shrieks and muttered spells of the beldams make the moon-forsaken night more hideous. But after piling up his horrors with the most elaborate skill, as if in the view of some terrible climax, the poet makes them collapse into utter farce. Disgusted by their intrusion on his privacy, the Priapus adopts a simple but exceedingly vulgar expedient to alarm these appalling hags. In an instant they fall into the most abject terror, suspend their incantations, and, tucking up their skirts, make off for the more comfortable quarters of the city as fast as their trembling limbs can carry them—Canidia, the great enchantress, dropping her false teeth, and her attendant Sagana parting company with her wig, by the way:—

“ While you  
With laughter long and loud might view  
Their herbs, and charmed adders wound  
In mystic coils, bestrew the ground.”

And yet grave scholars gravely ask us to believe that Canidia was an old mistress of the poet's! These poems evidently made a success, and Horace returned to the theme in his 17th Epode. Here he writes as though he had been put under a spell by Canidia, in revenge for his former calumnies about her.

“ My youth has fled, my rosy hue  
Turned to a wan and livid blue;  
Blanched by thy mixtures is my hair;  
No respite have I from despair.

The days and nights, they wax and wane,  
 Yet bring me no release from pain ;  
 Nor can I ease, howe'er I gasp,  
 The spasm, which holds me in its grasp."

Here we have all the well-known symptoms of a man under a malign magical influence. In this extremity Horace affects to recant all the mischief he has formerly spoken of the enchantress. Let her name what penance he will, he is ready to perform it. If a hundred steers will appease her wrath, they are hers ; or if she prefers to be sung of as the chaste and good, and to range above the spheres as a golden star, his lyre is at her service. Her parentage is as unexceptionable as her life is pure ; but whilst ostentatiously disclaiming his libels, the poet takes care to insinuate them anew, by apostrophising her, in conclusion, thus :—

" Thou who dost ne'er in haglike wont  
 Among the tombs of paupers hunt  
 For ashes newly laid in ground,  
 Love-charms and philtres to compound,  
 Thy heart is gentle, pure thy hands."

Of course, Canidia is not mollified by such a recantation as this. The man who—

" Branding her name with ill renown,  
 Made her the talk of all the town,"

is not so lightly to be forgiven.

" You'd have a speedy doom? But no,  
 It shall be lingering, sharp, and slow."

The pangs of Tantalus, of Prometheus, or of Sisyphus, are but the types of what his shall be. Let him try to hang, drown, stab himself—his efforts will be vain :—

“ Then comes my hour of triumph, then  
I'll goad you till you writhe again ;  
Then shall you curse the evil hour  
You made a mockery of my power.”

She then triumphantly reasserts the powers to which she lays claim. What ! I, she exclaims, who can waste life as the waxen image of my victim melts before my magic fire<sup>1</sup>—I, who can bring down the moon from her sphere, evoke the dead from their ashes, and turn the affections by my philtres,—

“ Shall I my potent art bemoan  
As impotent 'gainst thee alone ?”

Surely all this is as purely the work of imagination as Middleton's “Witch,” or the Hags in “Macbeth,” or in Goethe's ‘Faust.’ Horace used *Canidia* as a byword for all that was hateful in the creatures of her craft, filthy as they were in their lives and odious in their persons. His literary and other friends were as familiar with her name in this sense as we are with those of *Squeers* and *Micawber*, as types of a class ; and the joke was well understood when, many years after, in the 8th of his Second Book of Satires, he said that *Nasidienus's* dinner-party broke up without their eating a morsel of the dishes after a certain point,—“As if a pestilential blast from *Canidia's* throat, more venomous than that of African vipers, had swept across them.”

<sup>1</sup> Thus *Hecate* in Middleton's “Witch” assures to the Duchess of Glo'ster “a sudden and subtle death” to her victim :—

“ His picture made in wax, and gently molten  
By a blue fire, kindled with dead men's eyes,  
Will waste him by degrees.”

## CHAPTER III.

INTRODUCTION TO MÆCENAS. — THE JOURNEY TO  
BRUNDUSIUM.

HORACE had not been long in Rome, after his return from Greece, before he had made himself a name. With what he got from the booksellers, or possibly by the help of friends, he had purchased a patent place in the Quæstor's department, a sort of clerkship of the Treasury, which he continued to hold for many years, if not indeed to the close of his life. The duties were light, but they demanded, and at all events had, his occasional attention, even after he was otherwise provided for. Being his own—bought by his own money—it may have gratified his love of independence to feel that, if the worst came to the worst, he had his official salary to fall back upon.

Among his friends, men of letters are at this time, as might have been expected, found to be most conspicuous. Virgil, who had recently been despoiled, like himself, of his paternal property, took occasion to bring his name before Mæcenas, the confidential adviser and minister of Octavius, in whom he had himself found a helpful friend. This was followed up by the commen-



dition of Varius, already celebrated as a writer of epic poetry, and whose tragedy of "Thyestes," if we are to trust Quintilian, was not unworthy to rank with the best tragedies of Greece. Mæcenas may not at first have been too well disposed towards a follower of the republican party, who had not been sparing of his satire against many of the supporters and favourites of Octavius. He sent for Horace, however (B.C. 39), and any prejudice on this score, if prejudice there was, was ultimately got over. Mæcenas took time to form his estimate of the man, and it was not till nine months after their first interview that he sent for Horace again. When he did so, however, it was to ask him to consider himself for the future among the number of his friends. This part of Horace's story is told with admirable brevity and good feeling in the Satire from which we have already quoted, addressed to Mæcenas (B. I. Sat. 6) a few years afterwards.

"Lucky I will not call myself, as though  
Thy friendship I to mere good fortune owe.  
No chance it was secured me thy regards,  
But Virgil first, that best of men and bards,  
And then kind Varius mentioned what I was.  
Before you brought, with many a faltering pause,  
Dropping some few brief words (for bashfulness  
Robbed me of utterance), I did not profess  
That I was sprung of lineage old and great,  
Or used to canter round my own estate  
On Satureian barb, but what and who  
I was as plainly told. As usual, you  
Brief answer make me. I retire, and then,  
Some nine months after, summoning me again,  
You bid me 'mongst your friends assume a place:  
And proud I feel that thus I won your grace,  
Not by an ancestry long known to fame,  
But by my life, and heart devoid of blame."

The name of Mæcenas is from this time inseparably associated with that of Horace. From what little is authentically known of that remarkable man, this much may be gathered. He was a man of great general accomplishment, well versed in the literature both of Greece and Rome, devoted to literature and the society of men of letters, a lover of the fine arts and of natural history, a connoisseur of gems and precious stones; fond of living in a grand style, and of surrounding himself with people who amused him, without being always very particular as to who or what they were. For the indulgence of all these tastes, his great wealth was more than sufficient. He reclaimed the Esquiline Hill from being the public nuisance we have already described, laid it out in gardens, and in the midst of these built himself a sumptuous palace, where the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore now stands, from which he commanded a superb view of the country looking towards Tivoli. To this palace, salubrious from its spacious size and the elevation of its site, Augustus, when ill, had himself carried from his own modest mansion; and from its lofty belvedere tower Nero is said to have enjoyed the spectacle of Rome in flames beneath him. Voluptuary and *dilettante* as Mæcenas was, he was nevertheless, like most men of a sombre and melancholy temperament, capable of great exertions; and he veiled under a cold exterior and reserved manners a habit of acute observation, a kind heart, and, in matters of public concern, a resolute will.

This latent energy of character, supported as it was by a subtle knowledge of mankind and a statesmanlike breadth of view, contributed in no small degree to the

ultimate triumph of Octavius Cæsar over his rivals, and to the successful establishment of the empire in his hands. When the news of Julius Cæsar's assassination reached the young Octavius, then only nineteen, in Apollonia, it has been said that Mæcenas was in attendance upon him as his governor or tutor. Be this so or not, as soon as Octavius appears in the political arena as his uncle's avenger, Mæcenas is found by his side. In several most important negotiations he acted as his representative. Thus (B.C. 40), the year before Horace was introduced to him, he, along with Cocceius Nerva, negotiated with Antony the peace of Brundisium, which resulted in Antony's ill-starred marriage with Cæsar's sister Octavia. Two years later he was again associated with Cocceius in a similar task, on which occasion Horace and Virgil accompanied him to Brundisium. He appears to have commanded in various expeditions, both naval and military, but it was at Rome, and in council that his services were chiefly sought; and he acted as one of the chief advisers of Augustus down to about five years before his death, when, either from ill health or some other unknown cause, he abandoned political life. More than once he was charged by Augustus with the administration of the civil affairs of Italy during his own absence, intrusted with his seal, and empowered to open all his letters addressed to the Senate, and, if necessary, to alter their contents, so as to adapt them to the condition of affairs at home. His aim, like that of Vipsanius Agrippa, who was in himself the Nelson and Wellington of the age, seems to have been to build up a united and flourishing empire in the person of Augustus. Whether

from temperament or policy, or both, he set his face against the system of cruelty and extermination which disgraced the triumvirate. When Octavius was one day condemning man after man to death, Mæcenas, after a vain attempt to reach him on the tribunal, where he sat surrounded by a dense crowd, wrote upon his tablets, *Surge tandem, Carnifex!*—“Butcher, break off!” and flung them across the crowd into the lap of Cæsar, who felt the rebuke, and immediately quitted the judgment-seat. His policy was that of conciliation; and while bent on the establishment of a monarchy, from what we must fairly assume to have been a patriotic conviction that this form of government could alone meet the exigencies of the time, he endeavoured to combine this with a due regard to individual liberty, and a free expression of individual opinion.

At the time of Horace’s introduction to him, Mæcenas was probably at his best, in the full vigour of his intellect, and alive with the generous emotions which must have animated a man bent as he was on securing tranquillity for the state, and healing the strife of factions, which were threatening it with ruin. His chief relaxation from the fatigue of public life was, to all appearance, found in the society of men of letters, and, judging by what Horace says (*Satires*, I. 9), the *vie intime* of his social circle must have been charming. To be admitted within it was a privilege eagerly coveted, and with good reason, for not only was this in itself a stamp of distinction, but his parties were well known as the pleasantest in Rome:—

“No house more free from all that’s base,  
In none cabals more out of place.

It hurts me not, if men I see  
More rich, or better read than me;  
Each has his place."

Like many of his contemporaries, who were eminent in political life, Mæcenas devoted himself to active literary work—for he wrote much, and on a variety of topics. His taste in literature was, however, better than his execution. His style was diffuse, affected, and obscure; but Seneca, who tells us this, and gives some examples which justify the criticism, tells us at the same time that his genius was massive and masculine (*grande et virile*), and that he would have been eminent for eloquence, if fortune had not spoiled him. However vicious his own style may have been, the man who encouraged three such writers as Virgil, Propertius, and Horace, not to mention others of great repute, whose works have perished, was clearly a sound judge of a good style in others.

As years went on, and the cares of public life grew less onerous, habits of self-indulgence appear to have grown upon Mæcenas. It will probably be well, however, to accept with some reserve what has been said against him on this head. Then, as now, men of rank and power were the victims of calumnious gossips and slanderous pamphleteers. His health became precarious. Incessant sleeplessness spoke of an overtaxed brain and shattered nerves. Life was full of pain; still he clung to it with a craven-like tenacity. So, at least, Seneca asserts, quoting in support of his statement some very bad verses by Mæcenas, which may be thus translated:—

*Life of Horace.*

“Lame in feet, and lame in fingers,  
 Crooked in back, with every tooth  
 Rattling in my head, yet, 'sooth,  
 I'm content, so life but lingers.  
 Gnaw my withers, rack my bones,  
 Life, mere life, for all atones.”

In one view these lines may certainly be construed to import the same sentiment as the speech of the miserable Claudio in “*Measure for Measure*,”—

“The weariest and most loathèd worldly life  
 That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment  
 Can lay on nature, is a paradise  
 To what we fear of death.”

But on the other hand, they may quite as fairly be regarded as merely giving expression to the tenet of the Epicurean philosophy, that however much we may suffer from physical pain or inconvenience, it is still possible to be happy, and wise to be content. “We know what we are; we know not what we may be!”

Not the least misfortune of Mæcenas was his marriage to a woman whom he could neither live with nor without—separating from and returning to her so often, that, according to Seneca, he was a thousand times married, yet never had but one wife. Friends he had many, loyal and devoted friends, on whose society and sympathy he leant more and more as the years wore on. He rarely stirred from Rome, loving its smoke, its thronged and noisy streets, its whirl of human passions, as Johnson loved Fleet Street, or “the sweet shady side of Pall Mall,” better than all the verdure of Tivoli, or the soft airs and exquisite scenery of Baiæ. He liked to read of these things, however; and may have

found as keen a pleasure in the scenery of the 'Georgics,' or in Horace's little landscape-pictures, as most men could have extracted from the scenes which they describe.

Such was the man, ushered into whose presence, Horace, the reckless lampooner and satirist, found himself embarrassed, and at a loss for words. Horace was not of the MacSycophant class, who cannot "keep their back straight in the presence of a great man;" nor do we think he had much of the nervous apprehensiveness of the poetic temperament. Why, then, should he have felt thus abashed? Partly, it may have been, from natural diffidence at encountering a man to gain whose goodwill was a matter of no small importance, but whose goodwill, he also knew by report, was not easily won; and partly, to find himself face to face with one so conspicuously identified with the cause against which he had fought, and the men whom he had hitherto had every reason to detest.

Once admitted by Mæcenas to the inner circle of his friends, Horace made his way there rapidly. Thus we find him, a few months afterwards, in the spring of B.C. 37, going to Brundisium with Mæcenas, who had been despatched thither on a mission of great public importance (Satires, I. 6). The first term of the triumvirate of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus had expired at the close of the previous year. No fresh arrangement had been made, and Antony, alarmed at the growing power of Octavius in Italy, had appeared off Brundisium with a fleet of 300 sail and a strong body of troops. The Brundisians—on a hint, probably, from Octavius—for-

bade his landing, and he had to go on to Tarentum, where terms were ultimately arranged for a renewal of the triumvirate. The moment was a critical one, for an open rupture between Octavius and Antony was imminent, which might well have proved disastrous to the former, had Antony joined his fleet to that of the younger Pompey, which, without his aid, had already proved more than a match for the naval force of Octavius.

To judge by Horace's narrative, all the friends who accompanied Mæcenas on this occasion, except his co-adjutor, Cocceius Nerva, who had three years before been engaged with him on a similar mission to Brundisium, were men whose thoughts were given more to literature than to politics. Horace starts from Rome with Heliodorus, a celebrated rhetorician, and they make their way very leisurely to Anxur (Terracina), where they are overtaken by Mæcenas.

" 'Twas fixed that we should meet with dear  
Mæcenas and Cocceius here,  
Who were upon a mission bound,  
Of consequence the most profound ;  
For who so skilled the feuds to close  
Of those, once friends, who now were foes?"

This is the only allusion throughout the poem to the object of the journey. The previous day, Horace had been balked of his dinner, the water being so bad, and his stomach so delicate, that he chose to fast rather than run the risk of making himself ill with it. And now at Terracina he found his eyes, which were weak, so troublesome, that he had to dose them well with a black wash.



These are the first indications we get of habitual delicacy of health, which, if not due altogether to the fatigues and exposures of his campaign with Brutus, had probably been increased by them.

“ Meanwhile beloved Mæcenus came,  
Cocceius too, and brought with them  
Fonteius Capito, a man  
Endowed with every grace that can  
A perfect gentleman attend,  
And Antony’s especial friend.”

They push on next day to Formiæ, and are amused at Fundi (Fondi) on the way by the consequential airs of the prefect of the place. It would almost seem as if the peacock nature must break out in a man the moment he becomes a prefect or a mayor.

“ There having rested for the night,  
With inexpressible delight  
We hail the dawn,—for we that day  
At Sinuessa, on our way  
With Plotius,<sup>1</sup> Virgil, Varius too,  
Have an appointed rendezvous ;  
Souls all, than whom the earth ne’er saw  
More noble, more exempt from flaw,  
Nor are there any on its round  
To whom I am more firmly bound.  
Oh, what embracings, and what mirth !  
Nothing, no, nothing, on this earth,  
Whilst I have reason, shall I e’er  
With a true genial friend compare !”

Next day they reach Capua, where, so soon as their mules are unpacked, away

<sup>1</sup> Plotius Tucca, himself a poet, and associated by Virgil with Varius in editing the *Æneid* after the poet’s death.

“ Mæcenās hies, at ball to play ;  
 To sleep myself and Virgil go,  
 For tennis-practice is, we know,  
 Injurious, quite beyond all question,  
 Both to weak eyes and weak digestion.”

With these and suchlike details Horace carries us pleasantly on with his party to Brundisium. They were manifestly in no hurry, for they took fourteen days, according to Gibbon's careful estimate, to travel 378 Roman miles. That they might have got over the ground much faster, if necessary, is certain from what is known of other journeys. Cæsar posted 100 miles a-day. Tiberius travelled 200 miles in twenty-four hours, when he was hastening to close the eyes of his brother Drusus ; and Statius (*Sylv.* 14, *Carm.* 3) talks of a man leaving Rome in the morning, and being at Baiaë or Puteoli, 127 miles off, before night.

“ Have but the will, be sure you'll find the way.  
 What shall stop him who starts at break of day  
 From sleeping Rome, and on the Lucrine sails  
 Before the sunshine into twilight pales ? ”

Just as, according to Sydney Smith, in his famous allusion to the triumphs of railway travelling, “the early Scotchman scratches himself in the morning mists of the North, and has his porridge in Piccadilly before the setting sun.”

Horace treats the expedition to Brundisium entirely as if it had been a pleasant tour. Gibbon thinks he may have done so purposely, to convince those who were jealous of his intimacy with the great statesman, “that his thoughts and occupations on the event were far from

being of a serious or political nature." But it was a rule with Horace, in all his writings, never to indicate, by the slightest word, that he knew any of the political secrets which, as the intimate friend of Mæcenas, he could scarcely have failed to know. He hated babbling of all kinds. A man who reported the private talk of friends, even on comparatively indifferent topics,—

" The churl, who out of doors will spread  
What 'mongst familiar friends is said,"—

(Epistle I. v. 24), was his especial aversion ; and he has more than once said, only not in such formal phrase, what Milton puts into the mouth of his "Samson Agonistes"—

" To have revealed  
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,  
How heinous had the fact been ! how deserving  
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded  
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,  
The mark of fool set on his front !"

Moreover, reticence, the indispensable quality, not of statesmen merely, but of their intimates, was not so rare a virtue in these days as in our own ; and as none would have expected Horace, in a poem of this kind, to make any political confidences, he can scarcely be supposed to have written it with any view to throwing the gossips of Rome off the scent. The excursion had been a pleasant one, and he thought its incidents worth noting. Hence the poem. Happily for us, who get from it most interesting glimpses of some of the familiar aspects of Roman life and manners, of which we should otherwise have known nothing. Here, for example, is a sketch of

how people fared in travelling by canal in those days, near Rome. Overcrowding, we see, is not an evil peculiar to our own days.

“ Now 'gan the night with gentle hand  
 To fold in shadows all the land,  
 And stars along the sky to scatter,  
 When there arose a hideous clatter,  
 Slaves slanging bargemen, bargemen slaves ;  
 ‘ Ho, haul up here ! how now, ye knaves,  
 Inside three hundred people stuff ?  
 Already there are quite enough !’  
 Collected were the fares at last,  
 The mule that drew our barge made fast,  
 But not till a good hour was gone.  
 Sleep was not to be thought upon,  
 The cursèd gnats were so provoking,  
 The bull-frogs set up such a croaking.  
 A bargeman, too, a drunken lout,  
 And passenger, sang turn about,  
 In tones remarkable for strength,  
 Their absent sweethearts, till at length  
 The passenger began to doze,  
 When up the stalwart bargeman rose,  
 His fastenings from the stone unwound,  
 And left the mule to graze around ;  
 Then down upon his back he lay,  
 And snored in a terrific way.”

Neither is the following allusion to the Jews and their creed without its value, especially when followed, as it is, by Horace's avowal, almost in the words of Lucretius (B. VI. 56), of what was then his own. Later in life he came to a very different conclusion. When the travellers reach Egnatia, their ridicule is excited by being shown or told, it is not very clear which, of incense kindled in the temple there miraculously without the application of fire.

“ This may your circumcisèd Jew  
Believe, but never I. For true  
I hold it that the Deities  
Enjoy themselves in careless ease ;<sup>1</sup>  
Nor think, when Nature, spurning Law,  
Does something which inspires our awe,  
'Tis sent by the offended gods  
Direct from their august abodes.”

Had Horace known anything of natural science, he might not have gone so far to seek for the explanation of the seeming miracle.

Gibbon speaks contemptuously of many of the incidents recorded in this poem, asking, “How could a man of taste reflect on them the day after?” But the poem has much more than a merely literary interest; thanks to such passages as these, and to the charming tribute by Horace to his friends previously cited.

Nothing can better illustrate the footing of easy friendship on which he soon came to stand with Mæcenas than the following poem (Epode III.), which must have been written before the year B.C. 32; for in that year Terentia became the mistress of the great palace on the Esquiline, and the allusion in the last verse is much too familiar to have been intended for her. Horace, whose delicacy of stomach was probably notorious, had apparently been the victim of a practical joke—a species of rough fun to which the Romans of the upper classes appear to have been particularly prone. It is difficult otherwise to

<sup>1</sup> So Tennyson, in his “Lotus-Eaters:”—

“ Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,  
In the hollow Lotus-land to live and lie reclined  
On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind.”

See the whole of the passage.

understand how he could have stumbled at Mæcenas's table on a dish so overdosed with garlic as that which provoked this humorous protest. From what we know of the abominations of an ordinary Roman banquet, the vegetable stew in this instance must have reached a climax of unusual atrocity.

“ If his old father's throat any impious sinner  
 Has cut with unnatural hand to the bone,  
 Give him garlic, more noxious than hemlock, at dinner.  
 Ye gods ! the strong stomachs that reapers must own !

With what poison is this that my vitals are heated ?  
 By viper's blood—certes, it cannot be less—  
 Stewed into the pot-herbs can I have been cheated ?  
 Or Canidia, did she cook the villanous mess ?

When Medea was struck by the handsome sea-rover,  
 Who in beauty outshone all his Argonaut band,  
 This mixture she took to lard Jason all over,  
 And so tamed the fire-breathing bulls to his hand.

With this her fell presents she dyed and infected,  
 On his innocent leman avenging the slight  
 Of her terrible beauty, forsaken, neglected,  
 And then on her car, dragon-wafted, took flight.

Never star on Apulia, the thirsty and arid,  
 Exhaled a more baleful or pestilent dew,  
 And the gift, which invincible Hercules carried,  
 Burned not to his bones more remorselessly through.

Should you e'er long again for such relish as this is,  
 Devoutly I'll pray, wag Mæcenas, I vow,  
 With her hand that your mistress arrest all your kisses,  
 And lie as far off as the couch will allow.”

It is startling to our notions to find so direct a reference as that in the last verse to the “reigning favourite” of Mæcenas ; but what are we to think of the following

lines, which point unequivocally to Mæcenas's wife, in the following Ode addressed to her husband (Odes, II. 12)?—

“ Would you, friend, for Phrygia's hoarded gold,  
Or all that Achæmenes' self possesses,  
Or e'en for what Araby's coffers hold,  
Barter one lock of her clustering tresses,  
While she stoops her throat to your burning kiss,  
Or, fondly cruel, the bliss denies you,  
She would have you snatch, or will, snatching this  
Herself, with a sweeter thrill surprise you?”

If Mæcenas allowed his friends to write of his wife in this strain, it is scarcely to be wondered at if that coquetish and capricious lady gave, as she did, “that worthy man good grounds for uneasiness.”

## CHAPTER IV.

PUBLICATION OF FIRST BOOK OF SATIRES.—HIS FRIENDS.  
—RECEIVES THE SABINE FARM FROM MÆCENAS.

IN B.C. 34, Horace published the First Book of his Satires, and placed in front of it one specially addressed to Mæcenas—a course which he adopted in each successive section of his poems, apparently to mark his sense of obligation to him as the most honoured of his friends. The name *Satires* does not truly indicate the nature of this series. They are rather didactic poems, couched in a more or less dramatic form, and carried on in an easy conversational tone, without for the most part any definite purpose, often diverging into such collateral topics as suggest themselves by the way, with all the ease and buoyancy of agreeable talk, and getting back or not, as it may happen, into the main line of idea with which they set out. Some of them are conceived in a vein of fine irony throughout. Others, like "The Journey to Brundisium," are mere narratives, relieved by humorous illustrations. But we do not find in them the epigrammatic force, the sternness of moral rebuke, or the scathing spirit of sarcasm, which are commonly associated with the idea of satire. Literary display appears never



to be aimed at. The plainest phrases, the homeliest illustrations, the most everyday topics—if they come in the way—are made use of for the purpose of insinuating or enforcing some useful truth. Point and epigram are the last things thought of; and therefore it is that Pope's translations, admirable as in themselves they are, fail to give an idea of the lightness of touch, the shifting lights and shades, the carelessness alternating with force, the artless natural manner, which distinguish these charming essays. "The terseness of Horace's language in his Satires," it has been well said, "is that of a proverb, neat because homely; while the terseness of Pope is that of an epigram, which will only become homely in time, because it is neat."

In writing these Satires, which he calls merely rhythmical prose, Horace disclaims for himself the title of poet; and at this time it would appear as if he had not even conceived the idea of "modulating Æolic song to the Italian lyre," on which he subsequently rested his hopes of posthumous fame. The very words of his disclaimer, however, show how well he appreciated the poet's gifts (Satires, I. 4):—

"First from the roll I strike myself of those I poets call,  
 For merely to compose in verse is not the all-in-all;  
 Nor if a man shall write, like me, things nigh to prose akin,  
 Shall he, however well he write, the name of poet win?  
 To genius, to the man whose soul is touched with fire divine,  
 Whose voice speaks like a trumpet-note, that honoured name assign.  
 . . . . 'Tis not enough that you compose your verse  
 In diction irreproachable, pure, scholarly, and terse,  
 Which, dislocate its cadence, by anybody may  
 Be spoken like the language of the father in the play.  
 Divest those things which now I write, and Lucilius wrote of yore,  
 Of certain measured cadences, by setting that before

Which was behind, and that before which I had placed behind,  
 Yet by no alchemy will you in the residuum find  
 The members still apparent of the dislocated bard,"—

a result which he contends would not ensue, however much you might disarrange the language of a passage of true poetry, such as one he quotes from Ennius, the poetic charm of which, by the way, is not very apparent.

Schooled, however, as he had been, in the pure literature of Greece, Horace aimed at a conciseness and purity of style which had been hitherto unknown in Roman satire, and studied, not unsuccessfully, to give to his own work, by great and well-disguised elaboration of finish, the concentrated force and picturesque precision which are large elements in all genuine poetry. His own practice, as we see from its results, is given in the following lines, and a better description of how didactic or satiric poetry should be written could scarcely be desired (*Satires*, I. 10):—

" 'Tis not enough, a poet's fame to make,  
 That you with bursts of mirth your audience shake ;  
 And yet to this, as all experience shows,  
 No small amount of skill and talent goes.  
 Your style must be concise, that what you say  
 May flow on clear and smooth, nor lose its way,  
 Stumbling and halting through a chaos drear  
 Of cumbrous words, that load the weary ear ;  
 And you must pass from grave to gay,—now, like  
 The rhetorician, vehemently strike,  
 Now, like the poet, deal a lighter hit  
 With easy playfulness and polished wit,—  
 Veil the stern vigour of a soul robust,  
 And flash your fancies, while like death you thrust ;  
 For men are more imperious, as a rule,  
 To slashing censure than to ridicule.  
 Here lay the merit of those writers, who  
 In the Old Comedy our fathers drew ;

Here should we struggle in their steps to tread,  
Whom for Hermogenes has never read,  
Nor that mere ape of his, who all day long  
Makes Calvus and Catullus all his song."

The concluding hit at Hermogenes Tigellius and his double is very characteristic of Horace's manner. When he has worked up his description of a vice to be avoided or a virtue to be pursued, he generally drives home his lesson by the mention of some well-known person's name, thus importing into his literary practice the method taken by his father, as we have seen, to impress his ethical teachings upon himself in his youth. The allusion to Calvus and Catullus, the only one anywhere made to them by Horace, is curious; but it would be wrong to infer from it that Horace meant to disparage these fine poets. Calvus had a great reputation both as an orator and poet; but, except some insignificant fragments, nothing of what he wrote is left. How Catullus wrote we do, however, know; and although it is conceivable that Horace had no great sympathy with some of his love-verses, which were probably of too sentimental a strain for his taste, we may be sure that he admired the brilliant genius as well as the fine workmanship of many of his other poems. At all events, he had too much good sense to launch a sneer at so great a poet recently dead, which would not only have been in the worst taste, but might justly have been ascribed to jealousy. When he talks, therefore, of a pair of fribbles who can sing nothing but Calvus and Catullus, it is, as Maclean has said in his note on the passage, "as if a man were to say of a modern English coxcomb, that he could sing Moore's

ballads from beginning to end, but could not understand a line of Shakespeare,"—no disparagement to Moore, whatever it might be to the vocalist. Hermogenes and his ape (whom we may identify with one Demetrius, who is subsequently coupled with him in the same Satire) were musicians and vocalists, idolised, after the manner of modern Italian singers, by the young misses of Rome. Pampered favourites of fashion, the Farinellis of the hour, their opinion on all matters of taste was sure to be as freely given as it was worthless. They had been, moreover, so indiscreet as to provoke Horace's sarcasm by running down his verses. Leave criticism, he rejoins, to men who have a right to judge. Stick to your proper vocation, and

" To puling girls, that listen and adore,  
Your love-lorn chants and woeful wailings pour !"

In the same Satire we have proof how warmly Horace thought and spoke of living poets. Thus :—

" In grave Iambic measures Pollio sings  
For our delight the deeds of mighty kings.  
The stately Epic Varius leads along,  
And where is voice so resonant, so strong?  
The Muses of the woods and plains have shed  
Their every grace and charm on Virgil's head."

With none of those will he compete. Satire is his element, and there he proclaims himself to be a humble follower of his great predecessor. But while he bows to Lucilius as his master, and owns him superior in polish and scholarly grace to the satirists who preceded him, still, he continues—

“ Still, were he living now—had only such  
Been Fate's decree—he would have blotted much,  
Cut everything away that could be called  
Crude or superfluous, or tame or bald ;  
Oft scratched his head, the labouring poet's trick,  
And bitten all his nails down to the quick.”

And then he lays down the canon for all composition of a high order, which can never be too often enforced :—

“ Oh yes, believe me, you must draw your pen  
Not once or twice, but o'er and o'er again,  
Through what you've written, if you would entice  
The man who reads you once to read you twice,—  
Not making popular applause your cue,  
But looking to find audience fit though few.”—(Conington.)

He had himself followed the rule, and found the reward. With natural exultation he appeals against the judgment of men of the Hermogenes type to an array of critics of whose good opinion he might well be proud :—

“ Mæcenas, Virgil, Varius,—if I please  
In my poor writings these and such as these,—  
If Plotius, Valgius, Fuscus will commend,  
And good Octavius, I've achieved my end.  
You, noble Pollio (let your friend disclaim  
All thoughts of flattery, when he names your name),  
Messala and his brother, Servius too,  
And Bibulus, and Furnius kind and true,  
With others, whom, despite their sense and wit,  
And friendly hearts, I purposely omit ;  
Such I would have my critics ; men to gain  
Whose smiles were pleasure, to forget them pain.”—(*Id.*)

It is not strange that Horace, even in these early days, numbered so many distinguished men among his friends, for, the question of genius apart, there must have been something particularly engaging in his kindly and affec-

tionate nature. He was a good hater, as all warm-hearted men are; and when his blood was up, he could, like Diggory, "remember his swashing blow." He would fain, as he says himself (*Satires*, II. 1), be at peace with all men:—

" But he who shall my temper try—  
 'Twere best to touch me not, say I—  
 Shall rue it, and through all the town  
 My verse shall damn him with renown."

But with his friends he was forbearing, devoted, lenient to their foibles, not boring them with his own, liberal in construing their motives, and as trustful in their loyalty to himself as he was assured of his own to them; clearly a man to be loved—a man pleasant to meet and pleasant to remember, constant, and to be relied on in sunshine or in gloom. Friendship with him was not a thing to be given by halves. He could see a friend's faults—no man quicker—but it did not lie in his mouth to babble about them. He was not one of those who "whisper faults and hesitate dislikes." Love me, love my friend, was his rule. Neither would he sit quietly by, while his friends were being disparaged. And if he has occasion himself to rally their foibles in his poems, he does so openly, and does it with such an implied sympathy and avowal of kindred weakness in himself, that to take offence was impossible. Above all, he possessed in perfection what Lord Beaconsfield happily calls "the rare gift of raillery, which flatters the self-love of those whom it seems not to spare." These characteristics are admirably indicated by Persius (*I. 116*) in speaking of his *Satires*—

“ Arch Horace, while he strove to mend,  
Probed all the foibles of his smiling friend ;  
Played lightly round and round each peccant part,  
And won, unfelt, an entrance to his heart.”—(Gifford.)

And we may be sure the same qualities were even more conspicuous in his personal intercourse with his friends. Satirist though he was, he is continually inculcating the duty of charitable judgments towards all men.

“ What's done we partly may compute,  
But know not what's resisted,”

is a thought often suggested by his works. The best need large grains of allowance, and to whom should these be given if not to friends? Here is his creed on this subject (Satires, I. 3):—

“ True love, we know, is blind ; defects, that blight  
The loved one's charms, escape the lover's sight,  
Nay, pass for beauties ; as Balbinus shows  
A passion for the wen on Agna's nose.  
Oh, with our friendships that we did the same,  
And screened our blindness under virtue's name !  
For we are bound to treat a friend's defect  
With touch most tender, and a fond respect ;  
Even as a father treats a child's, who hints,  
The urchin's eyes are roguish, if he squints :  
Or if he be as stunted, short, and thick,  
As Sisyphus the dwarf, will call him 'chick !'  
If crooked all ways, in back, in legs, and thighs,  
With softening phrases will the flaw disguise.  
So, if one friend too close a fist betrays,  
Let us ascribe it to his frugal ways ;  
Or is another—such we often find—  
To flippant jest and braggart talk inclined,  
'Tis only from a kindly wish to try  
To make the time 'mongst friends go lightly by ;  
Another's tongue is rough and over-free,  
Let's call it bluntness and sincerity ;

Another's choleric ; him we must screen,  
As cursed with feelings for his peace too keen.  
This is the course, methinks, that makes a friend,  
And, having made, secures him to the end."

What wonder, such being his practice—for Horace in this as in other things acted up to his professions—that he was so dear, as we see he was, to so many of the best men of his time ?

The very contrast which his life presented to that of most of his associates must have helped to attract them to him. Most of them were absorbed in either political or military pursuits. Wealth, power, dignity, the splendid prizes of ambition, were the dream of their lives. And even those whose tastes inclined mainly towards literature and art were not exempt from the prevailing passion for riches and display. Rich, they were eager to be more rich ; well placed in society, they were covetous of higher social distinction. Now at Rome, gay, luxurious, dissipated ; anon in Spain, Parthia, Syria, Africa, or wherever duty, interest, or pleasure called them, encountering perils by land and sea with reckless indifference to fatigue and danger, always with a hunger at their hearts for something, which, when found, did not appease it ; they must have felt a peculiar interest in a man who, without apparent effort, seemed to get so much more out of life than they were able to do, with all their struggles, and all their much larger apparent means of enjoyment. They must have seen that wealth and honour were both within his grasp, and they must have known, too, that it was from no lack of appreciation of either that he deliberately declined to seek them. Wealth would have pur-



chased for him many a refined pleasure which he could heartily appreciate, and honours might have saved him from some of the social slights which must have put his philosophy to a severe test. But he told them, in every variety of phrase and illustration—in ode, in satire, and epistle—that without self-control and temperance in all things, there would be no joy without remorse, no pleasure without fatigue—that it is from within that happiness must come, if it come at all—and that unless the mind has schooled itself to peace by holding the appetites under control, and by the renunciation of covetous desires,

“ We may be wise, or rich, or great,  
But never can be blest.”

And as he spoke, so they must have seen he lived. Wealth and honours would manifestly have been bought too dearly at the sacrifice of the tranquillity and independence which he early set before him as the objects of his life.

“ The content, surpassing wealth,  
The sage in meditation found ;”

the content which springs from living in consonance with the dictates of nature (*convenienter naturæ*), from healthful pursuits, from a conscience void of offence ; the content which is incompatible with the gnawing disquietudes of avarice, of ambition, of social envy,—with that in his heart, he knew he could be true to his genius, and make life worth living.

A man of this character must always be rare ; least of all was he likely to be common in Horace's day, when

the men in whose circle he was moving were engaged in the great task of crushing the civil strife which had shaken the stability of the Roman power, and of consolidating an empire greater and more powerful than her greatest statesmen had previously dreamed of. But all the more delightful to these men must it have been to come into intimate contact with a man who, while perfectly appreciating their special gifts and aims, could bring them back from the stir and excitement of their habitual life to think of other things than social or political successes, —to look into their own hearts, and to live for a time for something better and more enduring than the triumphs of vanity or ambition.

Horace from the first seems to have wisely determined to keep himself free from those shackles which most men are so eager to forge for themselves, by setting their heart on wealth and social distinction. With perfect sincerity he had told Mæcenas, as we have seen, that he coveted neither, and he gives his reasons thus (*Satires*, I. 6):—

“ For then a larger income must be made,  
Men’s favour courted, and their whims obeyed ;  
Nor could I then indulge a lonely mood,  
Away from town, in country solitude,  
For the false retinue of pseudo-friends,  
That all my movements servilely attends,  
More slaves must then be fed, more horses too,  
And chariots bought. Now have I nought to do,  
If I would even to Tarentum ride,  
But mount my bobtailed mule, my wallets tied  
Across his flanks, which, flapping as we go,  
With my ungainly ankles to and fro,  
Work his unhappy sides a world of weary woe.”

From this wise resolution he never swerved, and so

through life he maintained an attitude of independence in thought and action which would otherwise have been impossible. He does not say it in so many words, but the sentiment meets us all through his pages, which Burns, whose mode of thinking so often reminds us of Horace, puts into the line—

“ My freedom's a lairdship nae monarch may touch.”

And we shall hereafter have occasion to see that, when put to the proof, he acted upon this creed. Well might the overworked statesman have envied the poet the ease and freedom of his life, and longed to be able to spend a day as Horace, in the same Satire, tells us his days were passed!—

“ I walk alone, by mine own fancy led,  
Inquire the price of pot-herbs and of bread,  
The circus cross, to see its tricks and fun,  
The forum, too, at times, near set of sun ;  
With other fools there do I stand and gape  
Round fortune-tellers' stalls, thence home escape  
To a plain meal of pancakes, pulse, and peas ;  
Three young boy-slaves attend on me with these.  
Upon a slab of snow-white marble stand  
A goblet and two beakers ; near at hand,  
A common ewer, patera, and bowl ;  
Campania's potteries produced the whole.  
To sleep then I. . . . .  
I keep my couch till ten, then walk awhile,  
Or having read or writ what may beguile  
A quiet after-hour, anoint my limbs  
With oil, not such as filthy Natta skims  
From lamps defrauded of their unctuous fare.  
And when the sunbeams, grown too hot to bear,  
Warn me to quit the field, and hand-ball play,  
The bath takes all my weariness away.  
Then, having lightly dined, just to appease  
The sense of emptiness, I take mine ease,

Enjoying all home's simple luxury.  
This is the life of bard unclogged, like me,  
By stern ambition's miserable weight.  
So placed, I own with gratitude, my state  
Is sweeter, ay, than though a quæstor's power  
From sire and grandsire's sires had been my dower."

It would not have been easy to bribe a man of these simple habits and tastes, as some critics have contended that Horace was bribed, to become the laureate of a party to which he had once been opposed, even had Mæcenas wished to do so. His very indifference to those favours which were within the disposal of a great minister of state, placed him on a vantage-ground in his relations with Mæcenas which he could in no other way have secured. Nor, we may well believe, would that distinguished man have wished it otherwise. Surrounded as he was by servility and selfish baseness, he must have felt himself irresistibly drawn towards a nature so respectful, so affectionate, yet perfectly manly and independent, as that of the poet. Nor can we doubt that intimacy had grown into friendship, warm and sincere, before he gratified his own feelings, while he made Horace happy for life, by presenting him with a small estate in the Sabine country—a gift which, we may be sure, he knew well would be of all gifts the most welcome. It is demonstrable that it was not given earlier than B.C. 33, or after upwards of four years of intimate acquaintance. That Horace had longed for such a possession, he tells us himself (*Satires*, II. 6). He had probably expressed his longing in the hearing of his friend, and to such a friend the opportunity of turning the poet's dream into a reality must have been especially delightful.

The gift was a slight one for Mæcenas to bestow; but, with Horace's fondness for the country, it had a value for him beyond all price. It gave him a competency—*satis superque*—enough and more than he wanted for his needs. It gave him leisure, health, amusement; and, more precious than all, it secured him undisturbed freedom of thought, and opportunities for that calm intercourse with nature which he “needed for his spirit's health.” Never was gift better bestowed, or more worthily requited. To it we are indebted for much of that poetry which has linked the name of Mæcenas with that of the poet in associations the most engaging, and has afforded, and will afford, ever-new delight to successive generations.

The Sabine farm was situated in the valley of Ustica, thirty miles from Rome, and twelve miles from Tivoli. It possessed the attraction, no small one to Horace, of being very secluded—Varia (Vico Varo), the nearest town, being four miles off—yet, at the same time, within an easy distance of Rome. When his spirits wanted the stimulus of society or the bustle of the capital, which they often did, his ambling mule could speedily convey him thither; and when jaded, on the other hand, by the noise and racket and dissipations of Rome, he could, in the same homely way, bury himself within a few hours among the hills, and there, under the shadow of his favourite Lucretilis, or by the banks of the clear-flowing and ice-cold Digentia, either stretch himself to dream upon the grass, lulled by the murmurs of the stream, or do a little farming in the way of clearing his fields of stones, or turning over a furrow here and there with the

hoe. There was a rough wildness in the scenery and a sharpness in the air, both of which Horace liked, although, as years advanced and his health grew more delicate, he had to leave it in the colder months for Tivoli or Baiæ. He built a villa upon it, or added to one already there, the traces of which still exist. The farm gave employment to five families of free *coloni*, who were under the superintendence of a bailiff; and the poet's domestic establishment was composed of eight slaves. The site of the farm is at the present day a favourite resort of travellers, of Englishmen especially, who visit it in such numbers, and trace its features with such enthusiasm, that the resident peasantry, "who cannot conceive of any other source of interest in one so long dead and unsainted than that of co-patriotism or consanguinity," believe Horace to have been an Englishman.<sup>1</sup> What aspect it presented in Horace's time we gather from one of his Epistles (I. 16):—

“ As, dearest Quintus, you may wish to know  
 The things this country place of mine will grow,  
 If it enrich me with oil, apples, wine,  
 Or if its fields are best for corn or kine,  
 Its site and character I will essay  
 To picture for you in my chatty way.  
 Girdled by hills it lies, through which but one  
 Small valley, rich in shade, is seen to run,  
 Where on the right the morning sunbeams play,  
 Whilst on the left they rest at close of day.  
 You'd like the air. Wild cherry there, and sloe  
 Purply and dark, in rich profusion grow,  
 While oak and ilex bounteously afford  
 Food for my herds, and shelter for their lord.  
 'How's this?' you'd say, could you behold the scene;  
 'Tarentum's here, with all its wealth of green.'

<sup>1</sup> Letter by Mr Dennis: Milman's 'Horace' (London, 1849), p. 109.

We have a fountain, too, that well may claim  
To give the stream, whose source it is, a name;  
More cool, more clear, not Thracian Hebrus flows,  
Balm for head-pains, and for the stomach's woes.  
This dear, yea truly exquisite, retreat  
Keeps me in health through even September's heat."

Here is what a tourist found it in 1869: <sup>1</sup>—

"Following a path along the brink of the torrent Digen-  
tia, we passed a towering rock, on which once stood Vacu-  
na's shrine, and entered a pastoral region of well-watered  
meadow-lands, enamelled with flowers and studded with  
chestnut and fruit trees. Beneath their sheltering shade  
peasants were whiling away the noontide hours. Here sat  
Daphnis piping sweet witching melodies on a reed to his  
rustic Phidyle, whilst Lydia and she wove wreaths of wild-  
flowers, and Lyce sped down to the edge of the stream and  
brought us cooling drink in a bulging *conca* borne on her  
head. Its waters were as deliciously refreshing as they  
could have been when the poet himself gratefully recorded  
how often they revived his strength; and one longed to  
think, and hence half believed, that our homely Hebe, like  
her fellows, was sprung from the *coloni* who tilled his  
fields and dwelt in the five homesteads of which he sings.  
. . . . Near the little village of Licenza, standing like its  
loftier neighbour, Civitella, on a steep hill at the foot of  
Lucretilis, we turned off the path, crossed a thickly wooded  
knoll, and came to an orchard, in which two young labour-  
ers were at work. We asked where the remains of Horace's  
farm were. '*A piè tui!*' answered the nearest of them,  
in a dialect more like Latin than Italian. So saying, he  
began with a shovel to uncover a massive floor in very fair  
preservation; a little farther on was another, crumbling to  
pieces. Chaupy has luckily saved one all doubt as to the  
site of the farm, establishing to our minds convincingly  
that it could scarcely have stood on ground other than that

<sup>1</sup> 'Pall Mall Gazette,' August 16, 1869.

on which at this moment we were. As the shovel was clearing the floors, we thought how applicable to Horace himself were the lines he addressed to Fuscus Aristius, 'Naturam expelles furcâ, tamen usque recurret'—

“ ‘ Drive Nature forth by force, she'll turn and rout  
The false refinements that would keep her out ; ’—(Conington.)

for here was just enough of his home left to show how nature, creeping on step by step, had overwhelmed his handiwork and reasserted her sway. Again, pure and Augustan in design as was the pavement before us, how little could it vie with the hues and odours of the grasses that bloomed around it!—'Deterius Libycis olet aut nitet herba lapillis?'

“ ‘ Is springing grass less sweet to nose and eyes  
Than Libyan marble's tessellated dyes? ’—(*Id.*)

“ Indeed, so striking were these coincidences that we were as nearly as possible going off on the wrong tack, and singing 'Io Pæan' to Dame Nature herself at the expense of the bard; but we were soon brought back to our allegiance by a sense of the way in which all we saw tallied with the description of him who sang of nature so surpassingly well, who challenges posterity in charmed accents, and could shape the sternest and most concise of tongues into those melodious cadences that invest his undying verse with all the magic of music and all the freshness of youth. For this was clearly the 'angulus iste,' the nook which 'restored him to himself'—this the lovely spot which his steward longed to exchange for the slums of Rome. Below lay the greensward by the river, where it was sweet to recline in slumber. Here grew the vines, still trained, like his own, on the trunks and branches of trees. Yonder the brook which the rain would swell till it overflowed its margin, and his lazy steward and slaves were fain to bank it up; and above, among a wild jumble of hills, lay the woods where, on the Calends of March, Faunus interposed



to save him from the falling tree, and where another miracle preserved him from the attack of the wolf as he strolled along unarmed, singing of the soft voice and sweet smiles of his Lalage! The brook is now nearly dammed up; a wall of close-fitting rough-hewn stones gathers its waters into a still, dark pool; its overflow gushes out in a tiny rill that rushed down beside our path, mingling its murmur with the hum of myriads of insects that swarmed in the air."

On this farm lovers of Horace have been fain to place the fountain of Bandusia, which the poet loved so well, and to which he prophesied, and truly, as the issue has proved, immortality from his song (Odes, III. 13). Charming as the poem is, there could be no stronger proof of the poet's hold upon the hearts of men of all ages than the enthusiasm with which the very site of the spring has been contested.

"O fountain of Bandusia!  
Sparkling brighter in thy play,  
Far than crystal, thou of wine<sup>1</sup>  
Worthy art, and fragrant twine  
Of fairest flowers! To-morrow thou  
A kid shalt have, whose swelling brow,  
And horns just budding into life,  
Give promise both of love and strife.  
Vain promise all! For in the spring  
And glory of his wantoning,  
His blood shall stain thy waters cool  
With many a deep-ensanguined pool.

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<sup>1</sup> It seems strange that Horace should call the fountain worthy of wine and flowers (the lesser sacrifice of Cain), when he was about to offer it the greater sacrifice of Abel. Was the poem itself an adaptation of some Greek lyric, in which the poet promised to sacrifice a kid to the fountain beside which he and his boon-companions were wont to sit covered with flowers, and to temper their wine in its waters?

Thee the fiery star, the hot  
 Breath of noonday toucheth not ;  
 Thou a grateful cool dost yield  
 To the flocks that range a-field,  
 And breathest freshness from thy stream  
 To the labour-wearied team.  
 Thou, too, shalt be one ere long  
 Of the fountains famed in song,  
 When I chant the ilex bending  
 O'er thy mosses, whence descending,  
 Thy delicious waters bound,  
 Prattling to the rocks around."

Several commentators maintain, on what appears to be very inconclusive grounds, that the fountain was at Palazzo, six miles from Venusia. But the poem is obviously inspired by a fountain whose babble had often soothed the ear of Horace, long after he had ceased to visit Venusia. On his farm, therefore, let us believe it to exist, whichever of the springs that are still there we may choose to identify with his description. For there are several, and the local guides are by no means dogmatic as to the "*vero fonte*." That known as the "Fonte della Corte" seems to make out the strongest case for itself. It is within a few hundred yards of the villa, most abundant, and in this respect "fit" to name the river that there takes its rise, which the others—at present, at least—certainly are not.

Horace is never weary of singing the praises of his mountain home—" *Satis beatus unicus Sabinis,*"

" With what I have completely blest,  
 My happy little Sabine nest"—(Odes, II. 18.)

are the words in which he contrasts his own entire happiness with the restless misery of a millionaire in the midst

of his splendour. Again, in one of his Odes to Mæcenas (III. 16) he takes up and expands the same theme.

“ In my crystal stream, my woodland, though its acres are but few,  
And the trust that I shall gather home my crops in season due,  
Lies a joy, which he may never grasp, who rules in gorgeous state  
Fertile Africa’s dominions. Happier, happier far my fate !  
Though for me no bees Calabrian store their honey, nor doth wine  
Sickening in the Læstrygonian amphora for me refine ;  
Though for me no flocks unnumbered, browsing Gallia’s pastures fair,  
Pant beneath their swelling fleeces, I at least am free from care ;  
Haggard want with direful clamour ravens never at my door,  
Nor wouldst thou, if more I wanted, oh my friend, deny me more.  
Appetites subdued will make me richer with my scanty gains,  
Than the realms of Alyattes wedded to Mygdonia’s plains.  
Much will evermore be wanting unto those who much demand ;  
Blest, whom Jove with what sufficeth dowers, but dowers with sparing hand.”

It is the nook of earth which, beyond all others, has a charm for him,—the one spot where he is all his own. Here, as Wordsworth beautifully says, he

“ Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch  
For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,  
A natural meal, days, months from Nature’s hand,  
Time, place, and business all at his command.”

It is in this delightful retreat that, in one of his most graceful Odes, he thus invites the fair Tyndaris to pay him a visit (I. 17):—

“ My own sweet Lucretilis ofttime can lure  
From his native Lycæus kind Faunus the fleet,  
To watch o’er my flocks, and to keep them secure  
From summer’s fierce winds, and its rains, and its heat.  
  
There the mates of a lord of too pungent a fragrance  
Securely through brake and o’er precipice climb,  
And crop, as they wander in happiest vagrance,  
The arbutus green, and the sweet-scented thyme.

Nor murderous wolf nor green snake may assail  
 My innocent kidlings, dear Tyndaris, when  
 His pipings resound through Ustica's low vale,  
 Till each mossed rock in music makes answer again.

The muse is still dear to the gods, and they shield  
 Me, their dutiful bard ; with a bounty divine  
 They have blessed me with all that the country can yield ;  
 Then come, and whatever I have shall be thine !

Here screened from the Dog-star, in valley retired,  
 Shalt thou sing that old song thou canst warble so well,  
 Which tells how one passion Penelope fired,  
 And charmed fickle Circe herself by its spell.

Here cups shalt thou sip, 'neath the broad-spreading shade  
 Of the innocent vintage of Lesbos at ease ;  
 No fumes of hot ire shall our banquet invade,  
 Or mar that sweet festival under the trees.

And fear not, lest Cyrus, that jealous young bear,  
 On thy poor little self his rude fingers should set—  
 Should pluck from thy bright locks the chaplet, and tear  
 Thy dress, that ne'er harmed him nor any one yet."

Had Milton this Ode in his thought. when he invited his  
 friend Lawes to a repast,

" Light and choice,  
 Of Attic taste with wine, whence we may rise,  
 To hear the lute well touched, and artful voice  
 Warble immortal notes, and Tuscan air" ?

The reference in the last verse to the violence of the  
 lady's lover—a violence of which ladies of her class were  
 constantly the victims—rather suggests that this Ode, if  
 addressed to a real personage at all, was meant less as an  
 invitation to the Sabine farm than as a balm to the lady's  
 wounded spirit.

In none of his poems is the poet's deep delight in the  
 country life of his Sabine home more apparent than in

the Sixth Satire of the Second Book, which has a double value,—for its biographical details, and as a specimen of his best manner in his Satires.

It is characteristic of Horace that in the very next Satire he makes his own servant Davus tell him that his rhapsodies about the country and its charms are mere humbug, and that, for all his ridicule of the shortcomings of his neighbours, he is just as inconstant as they are in his likings and dislikings. The poet in this way lets us see into his own little vanities, and secures the right by doing so to rally his friends for theirs. To his valet, at all events, by his own showing, he is no hero.

“ You're praising up incessantly  
 The habits, manners, likings, ways,  
 Of people in the good old days ;  
 Yet should some god this moment give  
 To you the power, like them to live,  
 You're just the man to say, ' I won't !'  
 Because in them you either don't  
 Believe, or else the courage lack,  
 The truth through thick and thin to back,  
 And, rather than its heights aspire,  
 Will go on sticking in the mire.  
 At Rome you for the country sigh ;  
 When in the country, to the sky  
 You, flighty as the thistle's down,  
 Are always crying up the town.  
 If no one asks you out to dine,  
 Oh, then the *pot-au-feu's* divine !  
 ' You go out on compulsion only—  
 'Tis so delightful to be lonely ;  
 And drinking bumpers is a bore  
 You shrink from daily more and more.  
 But only let Mæcenas send  
 Command for you to meet a friend ;  
 Although the message comes so late,  
 The lamps are being lighted, straight,

'Where's my pomade? Look sharp!' you shout,  
'Heavens! is there nobody about?  
Are you all deaf?' and, storming high  
At all the household, off you fly.  
When Milvius, and that set, anon  
Arrive to dine, and find you gone,  
With vigorous curses they retreat,  
Which I had rather not repeat."

Who could take amiss the rebuke of the kindly satirist, who was so ready to show up his own weaknesses? In this respect our own great satirist Thackeray is very like him. Nor is this strange. They had many points in common—the same keen eye for human folly, the same tolerance for the human weaknesses of which they were so conscious in themselves, the same genuine kindness of heart. Thackeray's terse and vivid style, too, is probably in some measure due to this, that to him, as to Malherbe, Horace was a kind of breviary.

## CHAPTER V.

LIFE IN ROME.—HORACE'S BORE.—EXTRAVAGANCE  
OF THE ROMAN DINNERS.

IT is one of the many charms of Horace's didactic writings, that he takes us into the very heart of the life of Rome. We lounge with its loungers along the Sacra Via; we stroll into the Campus Martius, where young Hebrus with his noble horsemanship is witching the blushing Neobule, already too much enamoured of the handsome Liparian; and the men of the old school are getting up an appetite by games of tennis, bowls, or quoits; while the young Grecianised fops—lispings feeble jokes—saunter by with a listless contempt for such vulgar gymnastics. We are in the Via Appia. Bariné sweeps along in her chariot in superb toilet, shooting glances from her sleepy cruel eyes. The young fellows are all agaze. What is this? Young Pompilius, not three months married, bows to her, with a visible spasm at the heart, as she hurries by, full in view of his young wife, who hides her mortification within the curtains of her litter, and hastens home to solitude and tears. Here comes Barrus—as ugly a dog as any in Rome—dressed to death; and smiling Malvolio-smiles of self-complacency. The girls

titter and exchange glances as he passes ; Barrus swaggers on, feeling himself an inch taller in the conviction that he is slaughtering the hearts of the dear creatures by the score. A mule, with a dead boar thrown across it, now winds its way among the chariots and litters. A little ahead of it stalks Gargilius, attended by a strong force of retainers armed with spears and nets, enough to thin the game of the Hercynian forest. Little does the mighty hunter dream, that all his friends, who congratulate him on his success, are asking themselves and each other, where he bought the boar, and for how much? Have we never encountered a piscatory Gargilius near the Spey or the Tweed? We wander back into the city and its narrow streets. In one we are jammed into a doorway by a train of builders' waggons laden with huge blocks of stone, or massive logs of timber. Escaping these, we run against a line of undertakers' men, "performing" a voluminous and expensive funeral, to the discomfort of everybody and the impoverishment of the dead man's kindred. In the next street we run the risk of being crushed by some huge piece of masonry in the act of being swung by a crane into its place ; and while calculating the chances of its fall with upturned eye, we find ourselves landed in the gutter by an unclean pig, which has darted between our legs at some attractive garbage beyond. This peril over, we encounter at the next turning a mad dog, who makes a passing snap at our toga as he darts into a neighbouring blind alley, whither we do not care to follow his vagaries among a covey of young Roman street Arabs. Before we reach home a mumping beggar drops before us as we turn the corner, in a well-



simulated fit of epilepsy or of helpless lameness. ‘*Quare peregrinum*’—“Try that game on country cousins,”—we mutter in our beard, and retreat to our lodgings on the third floor, encountering probably on the stair some half-tipsy artisan or slave, who is descending from the attics for another cup of fiery wine at the nearest wine-shop.

We go to the theatre. The play is “*Ilione*,” by Pacuvius; the scene a highly sensational one, where the ghost of Deiphobus, her son, appearing to *Ilione*, beseeches her to give his body burial. “O mother, mother,” he cries, in tones most raucously tragic, “hear me call!” But the Kynaston of the day who plays *Ilione* has been soothing his maternal sorrow with too potent Falernian. He slumbers on. The populace, like the gods of our gallery, surmise the truth, and, “O mother, mother, hear me call!” is bellowed from a thousand lungs. We are enjoying a comedy, when our friends the people, “the many-headed monster of the pit,” begin to think it slow, and stop the performance with shouts for a show of bears or boxers. Or, hoping to hear a good play, we find the entertainment offered consists of pure spectacle, “inexplicable dumb-show and noise”—

“Cars, chariots, ships, in thronged succession pass,  
And captive ivory towers with captive brass.”

A milk-white elephant or a camelopard is considered more than a substitute for character, incident, or wit. And if an actor presents himself in a dress of unusual splendour, the house is in ecstasies, and a roar of applause, loud as a tempest in the Garganian forest, or as the surges on the Tuscan strand, makes the velarium vibrate above their heads. Human nature is perpetually

repeating itself. So when Pope is paraphrasing Horace, he has no occasion to alter the facts, which were the same in his pseudo, as in the real, Augustan age, but only to modernise the names :—

“ Loud as the waves on Orcas’ stormy steep  
Howl to the roarings of the Northern deep,  
Such is the shout, the long-applauding note,  
At Quin’s high plume, or Oldfield’s petticoat.  
Booth enters—hark ! the universal peal.  
‘ But has he spoken ? ’ Not a syllable.  
‘ What shook the stage, and made the people stare ? ’  
‘ Cato’s long wig, flowered gown, and lacquered chair.’ ”

We dine out. Mæcenas is of the party, and comes in leaning heavily on the two *umbræ* (guests of his own inviting) whom he has brought with him,—*habitués* of what Augustus called his “parasitical table,” who make talk and find buffoonery for him. He is out of spirits to-day, and more reserved than usual, for a messenger has just come in with bad news from Spain, or he has heard of a conspiracy against Augustus, which must be crushed before it grows more dangerous. Varius is there, and being a writer of tragedies, keeps up, as your tragic author is sure to do, a ceaseless fire of puns and pleasantry. At these young Sybaris smiles faintly, for his thoughts are away with his lady-love, the too fascinating Lydia. Horace—who, from the other side of the table, with an amused smile in his eyes, watches him, as he “sighs like furnace,” while Neæra, to the accompaniment of her lyre, sings one of Sappho’s most passionate odes—whispers something in the ear of the brilliant vocalist, which visibly provokes a witty repartee, with a special sting in it for Horace himself, at which the little man

winces—for have there not been certain love-passages of old between Neæra and himself? The wine circulates freely. Mæcenas warms, and drops, with the deliberation of a rich sonorous voice, now some sharp sarcasm, now some aphorism heavy with meaning, which sticks to the memory, like a saying of Talleyrand's. His *umbræ*, who have put but little of allaying Tiber in their cups, grow boisterous and abusive, and having insulted nearly everybody at the table by coarse personal banter, the party breaks up, and we are glad to get out with flushed cheeks and dizzy head into the cool air of an early summer night—all the more, that for the last half-hour young Piso at our elbow has been importuning us with whispered specimens of his very rickety elegiacs, and trying to settle an early appointment for us to hear him read the first six books of the great Epic with which he means to electrify the literary circles. We reach the Fabrician bridge, meditating as we go the repartees with which we might have turned the tables on those scurrilous followers of the great man, but did not. Suddenly we run up against a gentleman, who, raising his cloak over his head, is on the point of jumping into the Tiber. We seize him by his mantle, and discover in the intended suicide an old acquaintance, equally well known to the Jews and the bric-a-brac shops, whose tastes for speculation and articles of *vertu* have first brought him to the money-lenders, next to the dogs, and finally to the brink of the yellow Tiber. We give him all the sesterces we have about us, along with a few sustaining aphorisms from our commonplace-book upon the folly, if not the wickedness, of suicide, and see him safely home. When we

next encounter the decayed *virtuoso*, he has grown a beard (very badly kept), and set up as a philosopher of the hyper-virtuous Jaques school. Of course he lectures us upon every vice which we have not, and every little frailty which we have, with a pointed asperity that upsets our temper for the day, and causes us long afterwards to bewail the evil hour in which we rescued such an ill-conditioned grumbler from the kindly waters of the river.

These hints of life and manners, all drawn from the pages of Horace, might be infinitely extended, and a ramble in the streets of Rome in the present day is consequently fuller of vivid interest to a man who has these pages at his fingers' ends than it can possibly be to any other person.<sup>1</sup> Horace is so associated with all the localities, that one would think it the most natural thing in the world to come upon him at any turning. His old familiar haunts rise up about us out of the dust of centuries. We see a short thick-set man come sauntering along, "more fat than bard beseems." As he passes, lost in reverie, many turn round and look at him. Some point him out to their companions, and by what they say, we learn that this is Horace, the favourite of Mæcenas, the frequent visitor at the unpretending palace of Augustus, the self-made man and famous poet. He is still within sight, when his progress is arrested. He is in the hands of a bore of the first magnitude. But what ensued, let the

<sup>1</sup> " He can so mould Rome and her monuments  
Within the liquid marble of his lines,  
That they shall stand fresh and miraculous,  
Even when they mix with innovating dust."

—BEN JONSON.

reader gather from his own lips in the Ninth Satire of the First Book (“*Ibam forte Viâ Sacrà*”).

The Satires appear to have been completed when Horace was about thirty-five years old, and published collectively, B.C. 29. By this time his position in society was well assured. He numbered among his friends, as we have seen, the most eminent men in Rome,—

“Chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place”—

men who were not merely ripe scholars, but who had borne and were bearing a leading part in the great actions of that memorable epoch. Among such men he would be most at home, for there his wit, his shrewdness, his genial spirits, and high breeding would be best appreciated. But his own keen relish of life, and his delight in watching the lights and shades of human character, took him into that wider circle where witty and notable men are always eagerly sought after to grace the feasts or enliven the heavy splendour of the rich and the unlettered. He was still young, and happy in the animal spirits which make the exhausting life of a luxurious capital endurable even in spite of its pleasures. What Victor Hugo calls

“*Le banquet des amis, et quelquefois les soirs,  
Le baiser jeune et frais d'une blanche aux yeux noirs,*”

never quite lost their charm for him; but during this period they must often have tempted him into the elaborate dinners, the late hours, and the high-strung excitement, which made a retreat to the keen air and plain diet of his Sabine home scarcely less necessary for his body's than it was for his spirit's health. For,

much as he prized moderation in all things, and extolled "the mirth that after no repenting draws," good wine, good company, and fair and witty women would be sure to work their spell on a temperament so bright and sympathetic, and to quicken his spirits into a brilliancy and force, dazzling and delightful for the hour, but to be paid for next day in headache and depression.

He was all the more likely to suffer in this way from the very fact that, as a rule, he was simple and frugal in his tastes and habits. We have seen him (p. lxxi), in the early days of his stay in Rome, at his "plain meal of pancakes, pulse, and peas," served on homely earthenware. At his farm, again, beans and bacon form his staple dish. True to the old Roman taste, he was a great vegetarian; and in his charming ode, written for the opening of the temple of Apollo erected by Augustus on Mount Palatine (B.C. 28), he thinks it not out of place to mingle with his prayer for poetic power an entreaty that he may never be without wholesome vegetables and fruit.

" Let olives, endive, mallows light,  
 Be all my fare; and health  
 Give thou, Apollo, so I might  
 Enjoy my present wealth!  
 Give me but these, I ask no more,  
 These, and a mind entire—  
 An old age, not unhonoured, nor  
 Unsolaced by the lyre!"

Mæcenas himself is promised (Odes, III. 28), if he will visit the poet at the Sabine farm, "simple dinners neatly dressed;" and when Horace invites his friend Torquatus to dinner (Epistles, II. 5), he does it on the footing that this wealthy lawyer shall be content to put up with plain

vegetables and homely crockery (*modica olus omne patella*). The wine, he promises, shall be good, though not of any of the crack growths. If Torquatus wants better, he must send it himself. The appointments of the table, too, though of the simplest kind, shall be admirably kept—

“ The coverlets of faultless sheen,  
The napkins scrupulously clean,  
Your cup and salver such that they  
Unto yourself yourself display.”

Table-service neat to a nicety was obviously a great point with Horace. What plate he had was made to look its best. “*Ridet argento domus*”—“My plate, newly bur-nished, enlivens my rooms”—is one of the attractions held out in his invitation to the fair Phyllis to grace his table on Mæcenas’s birthday (Odes, IV. 11). And we may be very sure that his little dinners were served and waited on with the studied care and quiet finish of a refined simplicity. His rule on these matters is indicated by himself (Satires, II. 2):—

“ The proper thing is to be cleanly and nice,  
And yet so as not to be over precise ;  
To neither be constantly scolding your slaves,  
Like that old prig Albutus, as losels and knaves,  
Nor, like Nævius, in such things who’s rather too easy,  
To the guests at your board present water that’s greasy.”

To a man of these simple tastes, the elaborate banquets, borrowed from the Asiatic Greeks, which were then in fashion, must have been intolerable. He has introduced us to one of them in describing a dinner-party of nine given by one Nasidienus, a wealthy snob, to Mæcenas and others of Horace’s friends. The dinner

breaks down in a very amusing way, between the giver's love of display and his parsimony, which prompted him, on the one hand, to present his guests with the fashionable dainties, but, on the other, would not let him pay a price sufficient to insure their being good. The first course consists of a Lucanian wild boar, served with a garnish of turnips, radishes, and lettuce, in a sauce of anchovy-brine and wine-lees. Next comes an incongruous medley of dishes, including one

"Of sparrows' gall and turbot's liver,  
At the mere thought of which I shiver."

A lamprey succeeds, "floating vast and free, by shrimps surrounded in a sea of sauce," and this is followed up by a crane soused in salt and flour, the liver of a snow-white goose fattened on figs, leverets' shoulders, and roasted blackbirds. This *menu* is clearly meant for a caricature, but it was a caricature of a prevailing folly, which had probably cost the poet many an indigestion.

Against this folly, and the ruin to health and purse which it entailed, some of his most vigorous satire is directed. It furnishes the themes of the Second and Fourth Satires of the Second Book, both of which, with slight modifications, might with equal truth be addressed to the dinner-givers and diners-out of our own day. In the former of these the speaker is the Apulian yeoman Ofellus, who undertakes to show

"What the virtue consists in, and why it is great,  
To live on a little, whatever your state."

Before entering on his task, however, he insists that his hearers shall cut themselves adrift from their luxuries, and



come to him fasting, and with appetites whetted by a sharp run with the hounds, a stiff bout at tennis, or some other vigorous gymnastics ;—

“ And when the hard work has your squeamishness routed,  
When you're parched up with thirst, and your hunger's undoubted,  
Then spurn simple food if you can, or plain wine,  
Which no honeyed gums from Hymettus refine.”

His homily then proceeds in terms which would not be out of place if addressed to a *gourmet* of modern London or Paris :—

“ When your butler's away, and the weather's so bad  
That there is not a morsel of fish to be had,  
A crust with some salt will soothe not amiss  
The ravening stomach. You ask, how is this ?  
Because for delight, at the best, you must look  
To yourself, and not to your wealth or your cook.<sup>1</sup>  
Work till you perspire. Of all sauces 'tis best.  
The man that's with over-indulgence oppressed,  
White-livered and pury, can relish no dish,  
Be it ortolans, oysters, or finest of fish.  
Still I scarcely can hope, if before you there were  
A peacock and capon, you would not prefer  
With the peacock to tickle your palate, you're so  
Completely the dupes of mere semblance and show.  
For to buy the rare bird only gold will avail,  
And he makes a grand show with his fine painted tail.  
As if this had to do with the matter the least!  
Can you make of the feathers you prize so a feast ?  
And, when the bird's cooked, what becomes of its splendour ?  
Is his flesh than the capon's more juicy or tender ?  
Mere appearance, not substance, then, clearly it is,  
Which bamboozles your judgment. So much, then, for this.”

<sup>1</sup> “ Pour l'amour de Dieu, un sou pour acheter un petit pain. J'ai si faim ! ” “ Comment ! ” responded the cloyed sensualist, in search of an appetite, who was thus accosted ; “ tu as faim, petit drôle ! Tu es bien heureux ! ” The readers of Pope will also remember his lines on the man who

“ Called 'happy dog' the beggar at his door,  
And envied thirst and hunger to the poor.”

Don't talk to me of taste, Ofellus continues—

" Will it give you a notion,  
If this pike in the Tiber was caught, or the ocean?  
If it used 'twixt the bridges to glide and to quiver,  
Or was tossed to and fro at the mouth of the river?"

Just as our epicures profess to distinguish by flavour a salmon fresh run from the sea from one that has been degenerating for four-and-twenty hours in the fresh water of the river—with this difference, however, that, unlike the salmon with us, the above-bridge pike was considered at Rome to be more delicate than his sea-bred and leaner brother.

Ofellus next proceeds to ridicule the taste which prizes what is set before it for mere size, or rarity, or cost. It is this, he contends, and not any excellence in the things themselves, which makes people load their tables with the sturgeon or the stork. Fashion, not flavour, prescribes the rule; indeed, the more perverted her ways, the more sure they are to be followed.

" So were any one now to assure us a treat  
In cormorants roasted, as tender and sweet,  
The young men of Rome are so prone to what's wrong,  
They'd eat cormorants all to a man, before long."

But, continues Ofellus, though I would have you frugal, I would not have you mean—

" One vicious extreme it is idle to shun,  
If into its opposite straightway you run ;"

illustrating his proposition by one of those graphic sketches which give a distinctive life to Horace's Satires.

“ There is Avidienus, to whom, like a burr,  
Sticks the name he was righteously dubbed by of ‘ Cur,’  
Eats beechmast and olives five years old, at least,  
And even when he’s robed all in white for a feast  
On his marriage or birth day, or some other very  
High festival day, when one likes to be merry,  
What wine from the chill of his cellar emerges—  
’Tis a drop at the best—has the flavour of verjuice ;  
While from a huge cruet his own sparing hand  
On his coleworts drops oil which no mortal can stand,  
So utterly loathsome and rancid in smell, it  
Defies his stale vinegar even to quell it.”

Let what you have be simple, the best of its kind, whatever that may be, and served in the best style. And now learn, continues the rustic sage,

“ In what way and how greatly you’ll gain  
By using a diet both sparing and plain.  
First, your health will be good ; for you readily can  
Believe how much mischief is done to a man  
By a great mass of dishes,—remembering that  
Plain fare of old times, and how lightly it sat.  
But the moment you mingle up boiled with roast meat,  
And shell-fish with thrushes, what tasted so sweet  
Will be turned into bile, and ferment, not digest, in  
Your stomach exciting a tumult intestine.  
Mark, from a bewildering dinner how pale  
Every man rises up ! Nor is this all they ail,  
For the body, weighed down by its last night’s excesses,  
To its own wretched level the mind, too, depresses,  
And to earth chains that spark of the essence divine ;  
While he, that’s content on plain viands to dine,  
Sleeps off his fatigues without effort, then gay  
As a lark rises up to the tasks of the day.  
Yet he on occasion will find himself able  
To enjoy without hurt a more liberal table,  
Say, on festival days, that come round with the year,  
Or when his strength’s low, and cries out for good cheer,  
Or when, as years gather, his age must be nursed  
With more delicate care than he wanted at first.  
But for you, when ill health or old age shall befall,  
Where’s the luxury left, the relief within call,

Which has not been forestalled in the days of your prime,  
When you scoffed, in your strength, at the inroads of time?

“ ‘ Keep your boar till it's rank ! ’ said our sires ; which arose,  
I am confident, not from their having no nose,  
But more from the notion that some of their best  
Should be kept in reserve for the chance of a guest :  
And though, ere he came, it grew stale on the shelf,  
This was better than eating all up by one's self.  
Oh, would I had only on earth found a place  
In the days of that noble heroic old race ! ”

So much as a question of mere health and good feeling. But now our moralist appeals to higher considerations :—

“ Do you set any store by good name, which we find  
Is more welcome than song to the ears of mankind?  
Magnificent turbot, plate richly embossed,  
Will bring infinite shame with an infinite cost.  
Add kinsmen and neighbours all furious, your own  
Disgust with yourself, when you find yourself groan  
For death, which has shut itself off from your hope,  
With not even a sou left to buy you a rope.

“ ‘ Most excellent doctrine ! ’ you answer, ‘ and would,  
For people like Trausius, be all very good ;  
But I have great wealth, and an income that brings  
In enough to provide for the wants of three kings.’  
But is this any reason you should not apply  
Your superfluous wealth to ends nobler, more high?  
You so rich, why should any good honest man lack?  
Our temples, why should they be tumbling to wrack?  
Wretch, of all this great heap have you nothing to spare  
For our dear native land? Or why should you dare  
To think that misfortune will never o'ertake you?  
Oh, then, what a butt would your enemies make you !  
Who will best meet reverses? The man who, you find,  
Has by luxuries pampered both body and mind?  
Or he who, contented with little, and still  
Looking on to the future, and fearful of ill,  
Long, long ere a murmur is heard from afar,  
In peace has laid up the munitions of war ? ”

Alas for the wisdom of Ofellus the sage ! Nineteen

centuries have come and gone, and the spectacle is still before us of the same selfishness, extravagance, and folly, which he rebuked so well and so vainly, but which we now see pushed to even greater excess, and more widely diffused, enervating the frames and ruining the fortunes of one great section of society, and helping to inspire another section, and that a dangerous one, with angry disgust at the hideous contrast between the opposite extremes of wretchedness and luxury which everywhere meets the eye in the great cities of the civilised world.

In the Fourth Satire of the Second Book, Horace ridicules, in a vein of exquisite irony, the *gourmets* of his day, who made a philosophy of flavours, with whom sauces were a science, and who had condensed into aphorisms the merits of the poultry, game, or fish of the different and often distant regions from which they were brought to Rome. Catus has been listening to a dissertation by some Brillât-Savarin of this class, and is hurrying home to commit to his tablets the precepts by which he professes himself to have been immensely struck, when he is met by Horace, and prevailed upon to repeat some of them in the very words of this philosopher of the dinner-table. Exceedingly curious they are, throwing no small light both upon the materials of the Roman *cuisine* and upon the treatment by the Romans of their wines. Being delivered, moreover, with the epigrammatic precision of philosophical axioms, their effect is infinitely amusing. Thus:—

“ Honey Aufidius mixed with strong  
Falernian ; he was very wrong.”

- “ The flesh of kid is rarely fine,  
That has been chiefly fed on vine.”
- “ To meadow mushrooms give the prize,  
And trust no others, if you're wise.”
- “ Till I had the example shown,  
The art was utterly unknown  
Of telling, when you taste a dish,  
The age and kind of bird or fish.”

Horace professes to be enraptured at the depth of sagacity and beauty of expression in what he hears, and exclaims,—

- “ Oh, learned Catius, prithee, by  
Our friendship, by the gods on high,  
Take me along with you, to hear  
Such wisdom, be it far or near !  
For though you tell me all—in fact,  
Your memory is most exact—  
Still there must be some grace of speech,  
Which no interpreter can reach.  
The look, too, of the man, the mien !  
Which you, what fortune ! having seen,  
May for that very reason deem  
Of no account ; but to the stream,  
Even at its very fountain-head,  
I fain would have my footsteps led,  
That, stooping, I may drink my fill,  
Where such life-giving saws distil.”

Manifestly the poet was no gastronome, or he would not have dealt thus sarcastically with matters so solemn and serious as the gusts, and flavours, and “sacred rage” of a highly educated appetite. At the same time, there is no reason to suppose him to have been insensible to the attractions of the *haute cuisine*, as developed by the genius of the Vattel or Francatelli of Mæcenas, and others of his wealthy friends. Indeed, he appears to have been prone, rather than otherwise, to attack these

with a relish, which his feeble digestion had frequent reason to repent. His servant Davus more than hints as much in the passage above quoted (p. lxxxi); and the consciousness of his own frailty may have given additional vigour to his assaults on the ever-increasing indulgence in the pleasures of the table, which he saw gaining ground so rapidly around him.

## CHAPTER VI.

## HORACE'S LOVE-POETRY.

WHEN young, Horace threw himself ardently into the pleasures of youth; and his friends being, for the most part, young and rich, their banquets were sure to be sumptuous, and carried far into the night. Nor in these days did the *blanche aux yeux noirs*, whose beauty and accomplishments formed the crowning grace of most bachelors' parties, fail to engage a liberal share of his attention. He tells us as much himself (Epistles, I. 14), when contrasting to the steward of his farm the tastes of his maturer years with the habits of his youth.

“ He, whom fine clothes became, and glistening hair,  
Whom Cinara welcomed,—that rapacious fair,—  
Though he came empty-handed, with delight;  
He, who of yore caroused from morn till night,  
Now quits the table soon, and loves to dream  
And drowse upon the grass beside a stream;”

adding, with a sententious brevity which it is hopeless to imitate, “*Nec luisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum,*”—

“ Nor blushes that of sport he took his fill;—  
He'd blushed, indeed, to be tomfooling still.”

Again, when lamenting how little the rolling years have



left him of his past (Epistles, II. 2), his regrets are for the "*Venerem, convivia, ludum,*" to which he no longer finds himself equal—

"Years following years steal something every day,  
Love, feasting, frolic, fun, they've swept away;"—

and to the first of these, life, "in his hot youth," manifestly owed much of its charm.

To beauty he would appear to have been always susceptible, but his was the lightly stirred susceptibility which is an affair of the senses rather than of the soul. "There is in truth," says Rochefoucauld, "only one kind of love; but there are a thousand different copies of it." Horace, so far at least as we can judge from his poetry, was no stranger to the spurious form of the passion, but his whole being had never been penetrated by the genuine fire. The goddess of his worship is not Venus Urania, pale, dreamy, spiritual, but "*Erycina ridens, quam Jocus circum volat et Cupido,*" who comes

"With laughter in her eyes, and Love  
And Glee around her flying."

Accordingly, of all those infinitely varied chords of deep emotion and imaginative tenderness, of which occasional traces are to be found in the literature of antiquity, and with which modern poetry, from Dante to Tennyson, is familiar, no hint is to be found in his pages. His deepest feeling is at best but a ferment of the blood; it is never the all-absorbing devotion of the heart. He had learned by his own experience just enough of the tender passion to enable him to write pretty verses about it, and to rally, not unsympathetically, such of his friends as had

not escaped so lightly from the flame. Therefore it is that, as has been truly said, "his love-ditties are, as it were, like flowers, beautiful in form and rich in hues, but without the scent that breathes to the heart." We seek in them in vain for the tenderness, the negation of self, the passion and the pathos, which are the soul of all true love-poetry.

At the same time, Horace had a subtle appreciation of the beauty and grace, the sweetness and the fascination, of womanhood. Poet as he was, he must have delighted to contemplate the ideal elevation and purity of woman, as occasionally depicted in the poetry of Greece, and of which he could scarcely fail to have had some glimpses in real life. Nay, he paints (Odes, III. 11) the devotion of Hypermnestra, for her husband's sake "magnificently false" (*splendide mendax*) to the promise which, with her sister Danaids, she had given to her father, in a way that proves he was not incapable of appreciating, and even of depicting, the purer and higher forms of female worth. But this exquisite portrait stands out in solitary splendour among the Lydes and Lalages, the Myrtales, Phrynes, and Glyceras of his other poems. These ladies were types of the class with which, probably, he was most familiar, those brilliant and accomplished *hetairæ*, generally Greeks, who were trained up in slavery with every art and accomplishment which could heighten their beauty or lend a charm to their society. Always beautiful, and by force of their very position framed to make themselves attractive, these "weeds of glorious feature," naturally enough, took the chief place in the regards of men of fortune, in a state of

society where marriage was not an affair of the heart but of money or connection, and where the wife so chosen seems to have been at pains to make herself more attractive to everybody rather than to her husband. Here and there these Aspasia's made themselves a distinguished position, and occupied a place with their protector nearly akin to that of wife. But in the ordinary way their reign over any one heart was short-lived, and their career, though splendid, was brief,—a youth of folly, a premature old age of squalor and neglect. Their habits were luxurious and extravagant. In dress they outvied the splendour, not insignificant, of the Roman matrons; and, like their counterparts in the parks of Paris or London, they might be seen courting the admiration of the wealthy loungers of Rome by dashing along the Appian Way behind a team of spirited ponies driven by themselves. These things were often paid for out of the ruin of their admirers. Their society, while in the bloom and freshness of their charms, was greatly sought after, for wit and song came with them to the feast. Even Cicero, then well up in years, finds a pleasant excuse (*Familiar Letters*, IX. 26) for enjoying till a late hour the society of one Cytheris, a lady of the class, at the house of Volumnius Eutrapelus, her protector. His friend Atticus was with him; and although Cicero finds some excuse necessary, it is still obvious that even grave and sober citizens might dine in such equivocal company without any serious compromise of character.

It was perhaps little to be wondered at that Horace did not squander his heart upon women of this class. His passions were too well controlled, and his love of

ease too strong, to admit of his being carried away by the headlong impulses of a deeply-seated devotion. This would probably have been the case even had the object of his passion been worthy of an unalloyed regard. As it was,

“ His loves were like most other loves,  
A little glow, a little shiver; ”—(Praed)

and if he sometimes had, like the rest of mankind, to pay his homage to the universal passion by “sighing upon his midnight pillow” for the regards of a mistress whom he could not win, or who had played him false, he was never at a loss to find a balm for his wounds elsewhere. He was not the man to nurse the bitter-sweet sorrows of the heart—to write, and to feel, like Burns—

“ ’Tis sweeter for thee despairing,  
Than aught in the world beside.”

“*Parabilem amo Venerem facilemque,*” “Give me the beauty that is not too coy,” is the Alpha and Omega of his personal creed. How should it have been otherwise? Knowing woman chiefly, as he obviously did, only in the ranks of those who made market of their charms, he was not likely to regard the fairest face, after the first heyday of his youth was past, as worth the pain its owner’s caprices could inflict. For, as seen under that phase, woman was apt to be both mercenary and capricious; and if the poet suffered, as he did, from the fickleness of more than one mistress, the probability is—and this he was too honest not to feel—that they had only forestalled him in inconstancy.

If Horace ever had a feeling which deserved the name

of love, it was for the Cinara mentioned in the lines above quoted. She belonged to the class of *hetairæ*, but seems to have preferred him, from a genuine feeling of affection, to her wealthier lovers. Holding him as she did completely under her thralldom, it was no more than natural that she should have played with his emotions, keeping him between ecstasy and torture, as such a woman, especially if her own heart were also somewhat engaged, would delight to do with a man in whose love she must have rejoiced as something to lean upon amid the sad frivolities of her life. The exquisite pain to which her caprices occasionally subjected him was more than he could bear in silence, and drove him, despite his quick sense of the ridiculous, into lachrymose avowals to Mæcenas of his misery over his wine, which were, doubtless, no small source of amusement to the easy-going statesman, before his wife Terentia had taught him by experience what infinite torture a charming and coquettish woman has it in her power to inflict. Long years afterwards, when he is well on to fifty, Horace reminds his friend (Epistles, I. 7) of

“The woes blabbed o’er our wine, when Cinara chose  
To tease me, cruel flirt—ah, happy woes!”

—words in which lurks a subtle under-current of pathos, like that in Sophie Arnould’s exclamation in *Le Brun’s* epigram,—

“Oh, le bon temps! j’étais bien malheureuse!”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The saying—Sophie Arnould’s own—had reference to her relations with her early lover, the Comte de Lauraguais, in which the transports of the most violent love on his part were mingled with outbursts of the most furious jealousy. It was no doubt prompted by what her biogra-

Twice also in his later odes (IV. 1 and 13), Horace recurs with tenderness to the "gentle Cinara" as having held the paramount place in his heart. She was his one bit of romance, and this all the more that she died young. "*Cinaræ breves annos fata dederunt*"—"Few years the fates to Cinara allowed;" and in his meditative rambles by the Digentia, the lonely poet, we may well believe, often found himself sighing "for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still."

In none of his love-poems is the ring of personal feeling more perceptible than in the following. It is one of his earliest, and if we are to identify the Neæra to whom it is addressed with the Neæra referred to in Ode 14, Book III., it must have been written *Consule Planco*,—that is, in the year of Horace's return to Rome after the battle of Philippi.

" 'Twas night!—let me recall to thee that night!

The silver moon in the unclouded sky

Amid the lesser stars was shining bright,

When, in the words I did adjure thee by,

Thou with thy clinging arms, more tightly knit

Around me than the ivy clasps the oak,

Didst breathe a vow—mocking the gods with it—

A vow which, false one, thou hast foully broke;

That while the ravening wolf should hunt the flocks,

The shipman's foe, Orion, vex the sea,

And zephyrs waft the unshorn Apollo's locks,

So long wouldst thou be fond, be true to me!

phers call "les instants bénis, où les souvenirs reffleurissaient après l'amertume de toutes ces méchantes colères qui fatiguent l'amour, mais ne le tuent pas."—"Sophie Arnould," par Ed. et J. de Goncourt (Paris, 1877), p. 40. "Ecoutez," they continue, "la vieille amoureuse! Appuyée au bras de Rulhières, elle se retourne vers sa jeunesse, vers ces années de tempête. 'Ah,' dit Sophie avec un sourire et une larme dans la voix, 'c'était le bon temps! j'étais bien malheureuse!'"

Yet shall thy heart, Neæra, bleed for this,  
For if in Flaccus aught of man remain,  
Give thou another joys that once were his,  
Some other maid more true shall soothe his pain ;  
Nor think again to lure him to thy heart !  
The pang once felt, his love is past recall ;  
And thou, more favoured youth, whoe'er thou art,  
Who revell'st now in triumph o'er his fall,  
Though thou be rich in land and golden store,  
In lore a sage, with shape framed to beguile,  
Thy heart shall ache when, this brief fancy o'er,  
She seeks a new love, and I calmly smile."

This is the poetry of youth, the passion of wounded vanity ; but it is clearly the product of a strong personal feeling—a feeling which has more often found expression in poetry than the higher emotions of those with whom "love is love for evermore," and who have infinite pity, but no rebuke, for faithlessness. The lines have been often imitated ; and in Sir Robert Aytoun's poem on "Woman's Inconstancy," the imitation has a charm not inferior to the original.

" Yet do thou glory in thy choice,  
Thy choice of his good fortune boast ;  
I'll neither grieve nor yet rejoice  
To see him gain what I have lost ;  
The height of my disdain shall be  
To laugh at him, to blush for thee ;  
To love thee still, yet go no more  
A-begging to a beggar's door."

Note how Horace deals with the same theme in his Ode to Pyrrha (Odes, II. 5), famous in Milton's over-rated translation, and the difference between the young man writing under the smart of wounded feeling, and the poet calmly though intensely elaborating his subject as a work of art, becomes at once apparent.

“What slim much-scented youth is he  
 Who now reposes,  
 Pyrrha, in some cool grot with thee  
 On beds of roses?  
 For whom, with careless grace arrayed,  
 Dost thou thy golden tresses braid?

How oft thy faith will he deplore  
 No longer true,  
 And Gods, alas! the same no more—  
 And wondering view,  
 To such a sight unused, the seas  
 Rough with a dark and threatening breeze,

Who now, most credulously blind,  
 Enjoyeth thee  
 His peerless love, and hopes to find  
 Thee ever free,  
 Thee ever fond as now, nor knows  
 That winds are treacherous. Wretched those

On whom thou shin'st, unproved as yet!  
 The sacred wall,  
 Whereon my votive scroll is set,  
 Proclaims to all  
 That I on Ocean's mighty god  
 My dripping vestments have bestowed.”<sup>1</sup>

It may be that among Horace's Odes some were directly inspired by the ladies to whom they are addressed, but it is time that modern criticism should brush away all the elaborate nonsense which has been written to demonstrate that Pyrrha, Chloe, Lalage, Lydia, Lyde, Leuconoë, Tyndaris, Glycera, and Bariné, not to mention others, were real personages to whom the poet was attached. At this rate his occupations must have rather been those of a Don Giovanni than of a man of studious

<sup>1</sup> This translation, with a slight alteration, is taken from 'The Odes of Horace, by Mortimer Harris. Privately printed. London: 1874,'—an admirable series of translations.



habits and feeble health, who found it hard enough to keep pace with the milder dissipations of the social circle. We are absolutely without any information as to these ladies, whose liquid and beautiful names are almost poems in themselves; nevertheless the most wonderful romances have been spun about them out of the inner consciousness of the commentators. Who would venture to deal in this way with the Eleanore, and "rare pale Margaret," and Cousin Amy, of Mr Tennyson?<sup>1</sup> And yet to do so would be quite as reasonable as to conclude, as some critics have done, that such a poem as the following (*Odes*, I. 23) was not a graceful poetical exercise merely, but a serious appeal to the object of a serious passion:—

"Nay, hear me, dearest Chloe, pray!  
You shun me like a timid fawn,  
That seeks its mother all the day  
By forest brake and upland lawn,  
Of every passing breeze afraid,  
And leaf that twitters in the glade.

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<sup>1</sup> This view has been confirmed by M. Richard (de Nancy) in his '*Commentaire Physiologique sur la personne d'Horace*:' Lyon, 1873. "Horace, in middle life," he says, "with a bad figure, weak eyes, and hair already white, could not, whatever he may say to the contrary, be well received by Cinara, Leuconoë, Tyndaris, Chloe, Lydia, Pyrrha, Bariné, Neobule, Chloris, Galatea, Phyllis, Phryne, and so many others. We might as well imagine that if our Béranger, with the homely fatherly countenance represented in the popular prints—that if this little man, with his bald head and round eyes, wrapped up in his ample overcoat, had sung his refrains in person to Luzon, Rose, Octavie, or Jeanneton, he would have been well received by them." The little treatise from which the above extract is taken gives the results of the application of the science of an able physiologist to the facts of Horace's physical peculiarities, as gleaned from his own works.

Let but the wind with sudden rush  
 The whispers of the wood awake,  
 Or lizard green disturb the hush,  
 Quick-darting through the grassy brake,  
 The foolish frightened thing will start,  
 With trembling knees and beating heart.

But I am neither lion fell  
 Nor tiger grim to work you woe ;  
 I love you, sweet one, much too well,  
 Then cling not to your mother so,  
 But to a lover's fonder arms  
 Confide your ripe and rosy charms."

Such a poem as this, one should have supposed, might have escaped the imputation of being dictated by mere personal desire. But no; even so acute a critic as Walckenaer will have it that Chloe was one of Horace's many mistresses, to whom he fled for consolation when Lydia, another of them, played him false, "et qu'il l'a recherchée avec empressement." And his sole ground for this conclusion is the circumstance that a Chloe is mentioned in this sense in the famous Dialogue, in which Horace and Lydia have quite gratuitously been assumed to be the speakers. That is to say, he first assumes that the dialogue is not a mere exercise of fancy, but a serious fact, and, having got so far, concludes as a matter of course that the Chloe of the one ode is the Chloe of the other! "The ancients," as Buttmann has well said, "had the skill to construct such poems so that each speech tells us by whom it is spoken; but we let the editors treat us all our lives as schoolboys, and interline such dialogues, as we do our plays, with the names. Even in an English poem we should be offended at seeing Collins by the side of Phyllis." Read without

the prepossession which the constant mention of it as a dialogue between Horace and Lydia makes it difficult to avoid, the Ode commends itself merely as a piece of graceful fancy. Real feeling is the last thing one looks for in two such excessively well-bred and fickle personages as the speakers. Their pouting and reconciliation make very pretty fooling, such as might be appropriate in the wonderful beings who people the garden landscapes of Watteau. But where are the fever and the strong pulse of passion which, in less ethereal mortals, would be proper to such a theme? Had there been a real lady in the case, the tone would have been less measured, and the strophes less skilfully balanced.

HORACE.

“ Whilst I to thee was dear,  
And yet no arm but mine  
Might clasp that neck of thine,  
Not Persia's monarch, high on throne, would I have owned my peer.

LYDIA.

Whilst yet no other girl  
More fired thee, nor the face  
Of Lydia gave to Chloe's place,  
Not Roman Iliia shone as peer to me of maids the pearl.

HORACE.

Apt at the lyre and song,  
Now Chloe is my queen ;  
For her, for her—but fear or teen—  
I'd give my life, could thus my love her dearer life prolong.

LYDIA.

Calais, sweet Thurian boy,  
Beloved, is now my lover—  
For him, for him, for him twice over,  
If so were spared his dearer life, my life I'd give with joy.

HORACE.

What if reviving love  
 Again should intertwine  
 Our souls, if Chloe I resign,  
 And Lydia's door for me once more on fluttering hinges move.

LYDIA.

Fairer than stars is he,—  
 More fickle thou than wind,  
 Than the vext seas more rude and oft unkind ;  
 But oh, my love, my love, I'd live, I'd die with thee !”<sup>1</sup>

In this graceful trifle Horace is simply dealing with one of the commonplaces of poetry, most probably only transplanting a Greek flower into the Latin soil. There is more of the vigour of originality and of living truth in the following ode to Bariné (II. 8), where he gives us a cameo portrait, carved with exquisite finish, of that *beauté de diable*, “dallying and dangerous,” as Charles Lamb called Peg Woffington's, and, what hers was not, heartless, which never dies out of the world. A real person, Lord Lytton thinks, “was certainly addressed, and in a tone which, to such a person, would have been the most exquisite flattery; and as certainly the person is not so addressed by a lover”—a criticism which, coming from such an observer, outweighs the opposite conclusions of a score of pedantic scholars :—

“ If for thy perjuries and broken truth,  
 Bariné, thou hadst ever come to harm,  
 Hadst lost, but in a nail or blackened tooth,  
 One single charm,  
 I'd trust thee ; but when thou art most forsworn,  
 Thou blazest forth with beauty most supreme,  
 And of our young men art, noon, night, and morn,  
 The thought, the dream.

<sup>1</sup> This spirited version of an Ode which has often been, and will continue to be, the despair of translators, is by Mr Patrick Alexander.

To thee 'tis gain thy mother's dust to mock,  
 To mock the silent watch-fires of the night,  
 All heaven, the gods, on whom death's icy shock  
 Can never light.

Smiles Venus' self, I vow, to see thy arts,  
 The guileless Nymphs and cruel Cupid smile,  
 And, smiling, whets on bloody stone his darts  
 Of fire the while.

Nay more, our youth grow up to be thy prey,  
 New slaves throng round, and those who crouched at first,  
 Though oft they threaten, leave not for a day  
 Thy roof accurst.

Thee mothers for their unfledged younglings dread;  
 Thee niggard old men dread, and brides new-made,  
 In misery, lest their lords neglect their bed,  
 By thee delayed."

Horace is more at home in playful raillery of the bewildering effect of love upon others, than in giving expression to its emotions as felt by himself. In the 14th Epode, it is true, he begs Mæcenas to excuse his failure to execute some promised poem, because he is so completely upset by his love for a certain naughty Phryne that he cannot put a couple of lines together. Again, he tells us (Odes, I. 19) into what a ferment his whole being has been thrown, long after he had thought himself safe from such emotions, by the marble-like sheen of Glycera's beauty—her *grata protervitas; et voltus nimium lubricus adspici*—

"Her pretty, pert, provoking ways,  
 And face too fatal-fair to see."

The First Ode of the Fourth Book is a beautiful fantasia on a similar theme. He paints, too, the tortures of jealousy with the vigour (Odes, I. 13) of a man who knew something of them :—

“ Then reels my brain, then on my cheek  
 The shifting colour comes and goes,  
 And tears, that flow unbidden, speak  
 The torture of my inward throes,  
 The fierce unrest, the deathless flame,  
 That slowly macerates my frame.”

And when rallying his friend Tibullus (Odes, I. 23) about his doleful ditties on the fickleness of his mistress Glycera, he owns to having himself suffered terribly in the same way. But despite all this, it is very obvious that if love has, in Rosalind's phrase, “clapped him on the shoulder,” the little god left him “heart-whole.” Being, as it is, the source of the deepest and strongest emotions, love presents many aspects for the humorist, and perhaps, as we see in Shakespeare, to no one more than to him who has felt it intensely. Horace may or may not have sounded the depths of the passion in his own person; but, in any case, a fellow-feeling for the lover's pleasures and pains served to infuse a tone of kindness into his ridicule. How charming in this way is the Ode to Lydia (I. 8), of which the late Henry Luttrel's once popular and still delightful ‘Letters to Julia’ is an elaborate paraphrase!—

“ Why, Lydia, why,  
 I pray, by all the gods above,  
 Art so resolved that Sybaris should die,  
 And all for love ?

Why doth he shun  
 The Campus Martius' sultry glare ?  
 He that once recked of neither dust nor sun,  
 Why rides he there,

First of the brave,  
 Taming the Gallic steed no more ?  
 Why doth he shrink from Tiber's yellow wave ?  
 Why thus abhor

The wrestlers' oil,  
As 'twere from viper's tongue distilled?  
Why do his arms no livid bruises soil,  
He, once so skilled,

The disc or dart  
Far, far beyond the mark to hurl?  
And tell me, tell me, in what nook apart,  
Like baby-girl,

Lurks the poor boy,  
Veiling his manhood, as did Thetis' son,  
To scape war's bloody clang, while fated Troy  
Was yet undone?

In the same class with this poem may be ranked the following ode (I. 27). Just as the poet has made us as familiar with the lovelorn Sybaris as if we knew him, so does he here transport us into the middle of a wine-party of young Romans, with that vivid dramatic force which constitutes one great source of the excellence of his lyrics.

“ Hold ! hold ! 'Tis for Thracian madmen to fight  
With wine-cups, that only were made for delight.  
'Tis barbarous—brutal ! I beg of you all,  
Disgrace not our banquet with bloodshed and brawl !

Sure, Median scimitars strangely accord  
With lamps and with wine at the festival board !  
'Tis out of all rule ! Friends, your places resume,  
And let us have order once more in the room !

If I am to join you in pledging a beaker  
Of this stout Falernian, choicest of liquor,  
Megilla's fair brother must say, from what eyes  
Flew the shaft, sweetly fatal, that causes his sighs.

How—dumb ! Then I drink not a drop. Never blush,  
Whoever the fair one may be, man ! Tush, tush !  
She'll do your taste credit, I'm certain—for yours  
Was always select in its little amours.

Don't be frightened ! We're all upon honour, you know,  
 So out with your tale !—Gracious powers ! is it so ?  
 Poor fellow ! Your lot has gone sadly amiss,  
 When you fell into such a Charybdis as this !

What witch, what magician, with drinks and with charms,  
 What god can effect your release from her harms ?  
 So fettered, scarce Pegasus' self, were he near you,  
 From the fangs of this triple Chimæra would clear you."

In this poem, which has all the effect of an impromptu, we have a *genre* picture of Roman life, as vivid as though painted by the pencil of Couture or Gerôme.

Serenades were as common an expedient among the Roman gallants of the days of Augustus as among their modern successors. In the fine climate of Greece, Italy, and Spain, they were a natural growth, and involved no great strain upon a wooer's endurance. They assume a very different aspect under a northern sky, where young Absolute, found by his Lydia Languish "in the garden, in the coldest night in January, stuck like a dripping statue," presents a rather lugubrious spectacle. Horace (Odes, III. 7) warns the fair Asteriè, during the absence of her husband abroad, to shut her ears against the musical nocturnes of a certain Enipeus :—

" At nightfall shut your doors, nor then  
 Look down into the street again,  
 When quavering fifes complain ;"

using almost the words of Shylock to his daughter Jessica :—

" Lock up my doors ; and when you hear the drum  
 And the vile squeaking of the wrynecked fife,  
 Clamber not you up to the casement then,  
 Nor thrust your head into the public street."



The name given to such a serenade, adopted probably, with the serenades themselves, from Greece, was *paraclausithyron*—literally, an out-of-door lament. Here is a specimen of what they were (Odes, III. 10), in which, under the guise of imitating their form, Horace quietly makes a mock of the absurdity of the practice. His serenader has none of the insensibility to the elements of the lover in the Scotch song:—

“ Wi’ the sleet in my hair, I’d gang ten miles and mair,  
For a word o’ that sweet lip o’ thine, o’ thine,  
For ae glance o’ thy dark e’e divine.”

Neither is there in his pleading the tone of earnest entreaty which marks the wooer, in a similar plight, of Burns’s “Let me in this ae nicht”—

“ Thou hear’st the winter wind and weet,  
Nae star blinks through the driving sleet;  
Tak’ pity on my weary feet,  
And shield me frae the rain, jo.”

There can be no mistake as to the seriousness of this appeal. Horace’s is a mere *jeu-d’esprit*:—

“ Though your drink were the Tanais, chillest of rivers,  
And your lot with some conjugal savage were cast,  
You would pity, sweet Lycè, the poor soul that shivers  
Out here at your door in the merciless blast.

Only hark how the doorway goes straining and creaking,  
And the piercing wind pipes through the trees that surround  
The court of your villa, while black frost is streaking  
With ice the crisp snow that lies thick on the ground!

In your pride—Venus hates it—no longer envelop ye,  
Or haply you’ll find yourself laid on the shelf;  
You never were made for a prudish Penelope,  
’Tis not in the blood of your sires or yourself.

Though nor gifts nor entreaties can win a soft answer,  
 Nor the violet pale of my love-ravaged cheek,  
 To your husband's intrigue with a Greek ballet-dancer  
 Though you are still blind, and forgiving and meek ;

Yet be not as cruel—forgive my upbraiding—  
 As snakes, nor as hard as the toughest of oak ;  
 To stand out here, drenched to the skin, serenading  
 'All night, may in time prove too much of a joke."

It is not often that Horace's poetry is vitiated by bad taste. Strangely enough, almost the only instances of it occur where he is writing of women, as in the Ode to Lydia (Book I. 25) and to Lycè (Book IV. 13). Both ladies seem to have been former favourites of his, and yet the burden of these poems is exultation in the decay of their charms. The deadening influence of mere sensuality, and of the prevalent low tone of morals, must indeed have been great, when a man "so singularly susceptible," as Lord Lytton has truly described him, "to amiable, graceful, gentle, and noble impressions of man and of life," could write of a woman whom he had once loved in a strain like this :—

"The gods have heard, the gods have heard my prayer ;  
 Yes, Lycè ! you are growing old, and still  
 You struggle to look fair ;  
 You drink, and dance, and trill  
 Your songs to youthful love, in accents weak  
 With wine, and age, and passion. Youthful Love !  
 He dwells in Chia's cheek,  
 And hears her harp-strings move.  
 Rude boy, he flies like lightning o'er the heath  
 Past withered trees like you ; you're wrinkled now ;  
 The white has left your teeth,  
 And settled on your brow.  
 Your Coan silks, your jewels bright as stars—  
 Ah no ! they bring not back the days of old,  
 In public calendars  
 By flying time enrolled.

Where now that beauty? Where those movements? Where  
That colour? What of her, of her is left,  
Who, breathing Love's own air,  
Me of myself bereft,  
Who reigned in Cinara's stead, a fair, fair face,  
Queen of sweet arts? But Fate to Cinara gave  
A life of little space;  
And now she cheats the grave  
Of Lycè, spared to raven's length of days,  
That youth may see, with laughter and disgust,  
A firebrand, once ablaze,  
Now smouldering in grey dust."—(Conington.)

What had this wretched Lycè done that Horace should have prayed the gods to strip her of her charms, and to degrade her from a haughty beauty into a maudlin hag, disgusting and ridiculous? Why cast such very merciless stones at one who, by his own avowal, had erewhile witched his very soul from him? Why rejoice to see this once beautiful creature the scoff of all the heartless young fops of Rome? If she had injured him, what of that? Was it so very strange that a woman trained, like all the class to which she belonged, to be the plaything of man's caprice, should have been fickle, mercenary, or even heartless? Poor Lycè might at least have claimed his silence, if he could not do, what Thackeray says every honest fellow should do, "think well of the woman he has once thought well of, and remember her with kindness and tenderness, as a man remembers a place where he has been very happy."

Horace's better self comes out in his playful appeal to his friend Xanthias (*Odes*, II. 4) not to be ashamed of having fallen in love with his handmaiden Phyllis. That she is a slave is a matter of no account. A girl of such admirable qualities must surely come of a good stock,

and is well worth any man's love. Did not Achilles succumb to Briseis, Ajax to Tecmessa, Agamemnon himself to Cassandra? Moreover,

“ For aught that you know, the fair Phyllis may be  
 The shoot of some highly respectable stem ;  
 Nay, she counts, never doubt it, some kings in her tree,  
 And laments the lost acres once lorded by them.  
 Never think that a creature so exquisite grew  
 In the haunts where but vice and dishonour are known,  
 Nor deem that a girl so unselfish, so true,  
 Had a mother 'twould shame thee to take for thine own.”

Here we have the true Horace; and after all these fascinating but doubtful Lydés, Neæras, and Pyrrhas, it is pleasant to come across a young beauty like this Phyllis, *sic fidelem sic lucro aversam*. She, at least, is a fresh and fragrant violet among the languorous hothouse splendours of the Horatian garden.

Domestic love, which plays so large a part in modern poetry, is a theme rarely touched on in Roman verse. Hence we know but little of the Romans in their homes—for such a topic used to be thought beneath the dignity of history—and especially little of the women, who presided over what have been called “the tender and temperate honours of the hearth.” The ladies who flourish in the poetry and also in the history of those times, however conspicuous for beauty or attraction, are not generally of the kind that make home happy. Such matrons as we chiefly read of there would in the present day be apt to figure in the divorce court. Nor is the explanation of this difficult. The prevalence of marriage for mere wealth or connection, and the facility of divorce, which made the marriage-tie almost a farce among the

upper classes, had resulted, as it could not fail to do, in a great debasement of morals. A lady did not lose caste either by being divorced, or by seeking divorce, from husband after husband. And as wives in the higher ranks often held the purse-strings, they made themselves pretty frequently more dreaded than beloved by their lords, through being tyrannical, if not unchaste, or both. So at least Horace plainly indicates (Odes, III. 24), when contrasting the vices of Rome with the simpler virtues of some of the nations that were under its sway. In those happier lands, he says, "*Nec dotata regit virum conjux, nec nitido fudit adultero*"—

" No dowried dame her spouse  
O'erbears, nor trusts the sleek seducer's vows."

But it would be as wrong to infer from this that the taint was universal, as it would be to gauge our own social morality by the erratic matrons and fast young ladies with whom satirical essayists delight to point their periods. The human heart is stronger than the corruptions of luxury, even among the luxurious and the rich; and the life of struggle and privation, which is the life of the mass of every nation, would have been intolerable but for the security and peace of well-ordered and happy households. Sweet honest love, cemented by years of sympathy and mutual endurance, was then, as ever, the salt of human life. Many a monumental inscription, steeped in the tenderest pathos, assures us of the fact. What, for example, must have been the home of the man who wrote on his wife's tomb, "She never caused me a pang but when she died!" And Catullus, mere man of pleasure as he was, must have had

strongly in his heart the thought of what a tender and pure-souled woman had been in his friend's home, when he wrote his exquisite lines to Calvus on the death of Quinctilia :—

“ Calvus, if those now silent in the tomb  
 Can feel the touch of pleasure in our tears  
 For those we loved, that perished in their bloom,  
 And the departed friends of former years—  
 Oh, then, full surely thy Quinctilia's woe  
 For the untimely fate, that bids thee part,  
 Will fade before the bliss she feels to know  
 How very dear she is unto thy heart !”<sup>1</sup>

Horace, the bachelor, revered the marriage-tie, and did his best, by his verses, to forward the policy of Augustus in his effort to arrest the decay of morals by enforcing the duty of marriage, which the well-to-do Romans of that day were inclined to shirk whenever they could. Nay, the charm of constancy and conjugal sympathy inspired a few of his very finest lines (Odes, I. 13)—  
*“Felices ter et amplius quos irrupta tenet copula,”* &c.,—  
 the feeling of which is better preserved in Moore's well-known paraphrase than is possible in mere translation :—

“ There's a bliss beyond all that the minstrel has told,  
 When two that are linked in one heavenly tie,  
 With heart never changing, and brow never cold,  
 Love on through all ills, and love on till they die !  
 One hour of a passion so sacred is worth  
 Whole ages of heartless and wandering bliss ;  
 And oh ! if there be an Elysium on earth,  
 It is this, it is this !”

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<sup>1</sup> In the same spirit is the following passage in the exquisite letter of condolence, in which Ser. Sulpicius remonstrates with Cicero on his excessive grief for the death of his daughter Tullia : *“Quod si qui etiam inferis sensus est, qui illius in te amor fuit, pietasque in omnes suos, hoc certe illa te facere non vult.”*

To leave the *placens uxor*—"the winsome wife"—behind, is one of the saddest regrets, Horace tells his friend Posthumus (Odes, II. 14), which death can bring. Still Horace only sang the praises of marriage, contenting himself with painting the Eden within which, for reasons unknown to us, he never sought to enter. He was well up in life, probably, before these sager views dawned upon him. Was it then too late to reduce his precepts to practice, or was he unable to overcome his dread of the *dotata conjux*, and thought his comfort would be safer in the hands of some less exacting fair, such as the Phyllis to whom the following Ode, one of his latest (IV. 11), is addressed?—

"I have laid in a cask of Albanian wine,  
Which nine mellow summers have ripened and more ;  
In my garden, dear Phyllis, thy brows to entwine,  
Grows the brightest of parsley in plentiful store.  
There is ivy to gleam on thy dark glossy hair ;  
My plate, newly burnished, enlivens my rooms ;  
And the altar, athirst for its victim, is there,  
Enwreathed with chaste vervain and choicest of blooms.

Every hand in the household is busily toiling,  
And hither and thither boys bustle and girls ;  
Whilst, up from the hearth-fires careering and coiling,  
The smoke round the rafter-beams languidly curls.  
Let the joys of the revel be parted between us !  
'Tis the Ides of young April, the day which divides  
The month, dearest Phyllis, of ocean-sprung Venus,—  
A day to me dearer than any besides.

And well may I prize it, and hail its returning—  
My own natal day not more hallowed nor dear ;  
For Mæcenas, my friend, dates from this happy morning  
The life which has swelled to a lustrous career.  
You sigh for young Telephus : better forget him !  
His rank is not yours, and the gaudier charms  
Of a girl that's both wealthy and wanton benet him,  
And hold him the fondest of slaves in her arms.

Remember fond Phaëthon's fiery sequel,  
 And heavenward-aspiring Bellerophon's fate ;  
 And pine not for one who would ne'er be your equal,  
 But level your hopes to a lowlier mate.  
 So, come, my own Phyllis, my heart's latest treasure—  
 For ne'er for another this bosom shall long—  
 And I'll teach, while your loved voice re-echoes the measure,  
 How to charm away care with the magic of song."

This is very pretty and picturesque; and Mæcenas was sure to be charmed with it as a birthday ode, for such it certainly was, whether there was any real Phyllis in the case or not. Most probably there was not,—the allusion to Telephus, the lady-killer, is so very like many other allusions of the same kind in other odes, which are plainly mere exercises of fancy, and the protestation that the lady is the very, very last of his loves, so precisely what all middle-aged gentlemen think it right to say, whose *jeunesse*, like the poet's, has been notoriously *orangeuse*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When these views were first published (1870), my friend the late W. G. Clark, Public Orator of Cambridge—a man whose knowledge of the world, no less than his fine scholarship, gave special value to his opinion—wrote to me: "I go with you thoroughly in your general conclusions, but I cannot bring myself to believe as firmly as you do in the reality of his Lydias, Cinaras, and Lalages. If we had the whole mass of Greek lyric poetry before us, we should probably find that Horace had cleverly imitated, or even translated, in many odes which now seem to us to be original. I think that Horace's contemporaries would take quite as much pleasure in a successful imitation of an old Greek favourite as in an original poem, and find the same charm in such imitations as our fathers found in 'London' and 'The Vanity of Human Wishes.' The characteristic traits of Horace's women are, to my mind, wanting in individuality, and are such as belong to '*devia scorta*' in all ages and countries. 'Beshrew me' if I believe in the existence of one of them, except the '*mendax puella*' who failed in her appointment on the road to Brundisium."



It was probably not within the circle of his city friends that Horace saw the women for whom he entertained the deepest respect, but by the hearth-fire in the farmhouse, "the homely house, that harbours quiet rest," with which he was no less familiar, where people lived in a simple and natural way, and where, if anywhere, good wives and mothers were certain to be found. It was manifestly by some woman of this class that the following poem (Odes, III. 23) was inspired :—

" If thou, at each new moon, thine upturned palms,  
My rustic Phidyle, to heaven shalt lift,  
The Lares soothe with steam of fragrant balms,  
A sow, and fruits new-plucked, thy simple gift,

Nor venom'd blast shall nip thy fertile vine,  
Nor mildew blight thy harvest in the ear ;  
Nor shall thy flocks, sweet nurslings, peak and pine,  
When apple-bearing Autumn chills the year.

The victim marked for sacrifice, that feeds  
On snow-capped Algidus, in leafy lane  
Of oak and ilex, or on Alba's meads,  
With its rich blood the pontiff's axe may stain ;

Thy little gods for humbler tribute call  
Than blood of many victims ; twine for them  
Of rosemary a simple coronal,  
And the lush myrtle's frail and fragrant stem.

The costliest sacrifice that wealth can make  
From the incensed Penates less commands  
A soft response, than doth the poorest cake,  
If on the altar laid with spotless hands."

When this was written, Horace had got far beyond the Epicurean creed of his youth (*ante*, p. lvii). He had come to believe in the active intervention of a Supreme

Disposer of events in the government of the world,—  
“*insignem attenuans, obscura promens*” (Odes, I. 34):—

“ The mighty ones of earth o'erthrowing,  
Advancing the obscure ; ”—

and to whose “pure eyes and perfect witness” a blameless life and a conscience void of offence were not indifferent.

## CHAPTER VII.

HORACE'S POEMS TO HIS FRIENDS.—HIS PRAISES  
OF CONTENTMENT.

IF it be merely the poet, and not the lover, who speaks in most of Horace's love-verses, there can never be any doubt that the poems to his friends come direct from his heart. They glow with feeling. To whatever chord they are attuned, sad, or solemn, or joyous, they are always delightful; consummate in their grace of expression, while they have all the warmth and easy flow of spontaneous emotion. Take, for example, the following (Odes, II. 7). Pompeius Varus, a fellow-student with Horace at Athens, and a brother in arms under Brutus, who, after the defeat of Philippi, had joined the party of the younger Pompey, has returned to Rome, profiting probably by the general amnesty granted by Octavius to his adversaries after the battle of Actium. How his heart must have leapt at such a welcome from his poet-friend as this!—

“ Dear comrade in the days when thou and I  
With Brutus took the field, his perils bore,  
Who hath restored thee, freely as of yore,  
To thy home gods, and loved Italian sky,

Pompey, who wert the first my heart to share,  
 With whom full oft I've sped the lingering day,  
 Quaffing bright wine, as in our tents we lay,  
 With Syrian spikenard on our glistening hair?

With thee I shared Philippi's headlong flight,  
 My shield behind me left, which was not well,  
 When all that brave array was broke, and fell  
 In the vile dust full many a towering wight.

But me, poor trembler, swift Mercurius bore,  
 Wrapped in a cloud, through all the hostile din,  
 Whilst war's tumultuous eddies, closing in,  
 Swept thee away into the strife once more.

Then pay to Jove the feasts that are his fee,  
 And stretch at ease these war-worn limbs of thine  
 Beneath my laurel's shade ; nor spare the wine  
 Which I have treasured through long years for thee.

Pour till it touch the shining goblet's rim,  
 Care-drowning Massic ; let rich ointments flow  
 From amplest conch ! No measure we shall know !  
 What ! shall we wreaths of oozy parsley trim,

Or simple myrtle ? Whom will Venus<sup>1</sup> send  
 To rule our revel ? Wild my draughts shall be  
 As Thracian Bacchanals', for 'tis sweet to me  
 To lose my wits, when I regain my friend."

When Horace penned the playful allusion here made to having left his shield on the field of battle (*parmulâ non bene relicta*), he could never have thought that his commentators—professed admirers, too—would extract from it an admission of personal cowardice. As if any man, much more a Roman to Romans, would make such a confession ! Horace could obviously afford to put in this way the fact of his having given up a desperate

<sup>1</sup> Venus was the highest cast of the dice. The meaning here is, Who shall be the master of our feast?—that office falling to the member of the wine-party who threw sixes.

cause, for this very reason, that he had done his duty on the field of Philippi, and that it was known he had done it. Commentators will be so cruelly prosaic! The poet was quite as serious in saying that Mercury carried him out of the *mêlée* in a cloud, like one of Homer's heroes, as that he had left his shield discreditably (*non bene*) on the battle-field. But it requires a poetic sympathy, which in classical editors is rare, to understand that, as Lessing and others have urged, the very way he speaks of his own retreat was by implication a compliment, not ungraceful, to his friend, who had continued the struggle against the triumvirate, and come home at last, war-worn and weary, to find the more politic comrade of his youth one of the celebrities of Rome, and on the best of terms with the very men against whom they had once fought side by side.

Not less beautiful is the following Ode to Septimius, another of the poet's old companions in arms (Odes, II. 6). His speaking of himself in it as "with war and travel worn" has puzzled the commentators, as it is plain from the rest of the poem that it must have been written long after his campaigning days were past. But the fatigues of those days may have left their traces for many years; and the difficulty is at once got over if we suppose the poem to have been written under some little depression from languid health due to this cause. Tarentum, where his friend lived, and whose praises are so warmly sung, was a favourite resort of the poet's. He used to ride there (*ante*, p. lxx) on his mule, very possibly to visit Septimius, before he had his own Sabine villa; and all his love for that villa never chilled his admiration for

Tibur, with its "sylvan shades, and orchards moist with wimpling rills,"—the "*Tiburni lucus et uda mobilibus pomaria rivis*,"—and its milder climate, so genial to his sun-loving temperament.

"Septimius, thou who wouldst, I know,  
With me to distant Gades go,  
And visit the Cantabrian fell,  
Whom all our triumphs cannot quell,  
And even the sands barbarian brave,  
Where ceaseless seethes the Moorish wave ;

May Tibur, that delightful haunt,  
Reared by an Argive emigrant,  
The tranquil haven be, I pray,  
For my old age to wear away ;  
Oh, may it be the final bourne  
To one with war and travel worn !

But should the cruel fates decree  
That this, my friend, shall never be,  
Then to Galæsus, river sweet  
To skin-clad flocks, will I retreat,  
And those rich meads, where sway of yore  
Laconian Phalanthus bore.

In all the world no spot there is,  
That wears for me a smile like this,  
The honey of whose thymy fields  
May vie with what Hymettus yields,  
Where berries clustering every slope  
May with Venafrum's greenest cope.

There Jove accords a lengthened spring,  
And winters wanting winter's sting,  
And sunny Aulon's <sup>1</sup> broad incline  
Such mettle puts into the vine,  
Its clusters need not envy those  
Which fiery Falernum grows.

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<sup>1</sup> Galæsus (Galaso), a river ; Aulon, a hill near Tarentum.

Thyself and me that spot invites,  
Those pleasant fields, those sunny heights ;  
And there, to life's last moments true,  
Wilt thou with some fond tears bedew—  
The last sad tribute love can lend—  
The ashes of thy poet-friend."

Septimius was himself a poet, or thought himself one,

"Who, scorning vulgar mere and homely rill,  
Of Pindar's fount has fearless quaffed his fill,"

as Horace says of him in an Epistle (I. 3) to Julius Florus; adding, with a sly touch of humour, which throws more than a doubt on the poetic powers of their common friend,—

"Thinks he of me? And does he still aspire  
To marry Theban strains to Latium's lyre,  
Or swells the tragic fury in his veins,  
And rolls its thunders in mouth-filling strains?"

When this was written Septimius was in Armenia along with Florus, on the staff of Tiberius Claudius Nero, the future emperor. For this appointment he was probably indebted to Horace, who applied for it, at his request, in the following Epistle to Tiberius (I. 9), which Addison ('Spectator,' 493) cites as a fine specimen of what a letter of introduction should be. Horace was, on principle, wisely chary of giving such introductions.

"Look round and round the man you recommend,  
For yours will be the shame if he offend"—(Conington)

is his maxim on this subject (Epistles, I. 18, 76); and he was sure to be especially scrupulous in writing to Tiberius, who, even in his youth—and he was at this time about twenty-two—was so morose and unpleasant in his man-

ners, to say nothing of his ample share of the hereditary pride of the Claudian family, that even Augustus felt under constraint in his company :—

“ Septimius only understands, 'twould seem,  
 How high I stand in, Claudius, your esteem :  
 For when he begs and prays me, day by day,  
 Before you his good qualities to lay,  
 As not unfit to share the heart and hearth  
 Of Nero, who selects his staff for worth,  
 When he supposes you to me extend  
 The rights and place of a familiar friend,  
 Far better than myself he sees and knows,  
 How far with you my commendation goes.  
 Pleas without number I protest I've used,  
 In hope he'd hold me from the task excused,  
 Yet feared the while it might be thought I feigned  
 Too low the influence I perchance have gained,  
 Dissembling it as nothing with my friends,  
 To keep it for my own peculiar ends.  
 So, to escape such dread reproach, I put  
 My blushes by, and boldly urge my suit.  
 If then you hold it as a grace, though small,  
 To doff one's bashfulness at friendship's call,  
 Enrol him in your suite, assured you'll find  
 A man of heart in him, as well as mind.”

We may be very sure that, among the many pleas urged by Horace for not giving Septimius the introduction he desired, was the folly of leaving his delightful retreat at Tarentum to go once more abroad in search of wealth or promotion. Let others “cross, to plunder provinces, the main,” surely this was no ambition for an embryo Pindar or half-developed Æschylus. Horace had tried similar remonstrances before, and with just as little success, upon Iccius, another of his scholarly friends, who sold off his fine library and joined an expedition into Arabia Felix, expecting to find it an El Dorado. He



playfully asks this studious friend (Odes, I. 29), from whom he expected better things—“*pollicitus meliora*”—if it be true that he grudges the Arabs their wealth, and is actually forging fetters for the hitherto invincible Sabæan monarchs, and those terrible Medians? To which of the royal damsels does he intend to throw the handkerchief, having first cut down her princely betrothed in single combat? Or what young “oiled and curled” oriental prince is for the future to pour out his wine for him? Iccius, like many another Raleigh, went out to gather wool, and came back shorn. The expedition proved disastrous, and he was lucky in being one of the few who survived it. Some years afterwards we meet with him again as the steward of Agrippa’s great estates in Sicily. He has resumed his studies,—

“ On themes sublime alone intent,—  
What causes the wild ocean sway,  
The seasons what from June to May,  
If free the constellations roll,  
Or moved by some supreme control;  
What makes the moon obscure her light,  
What pours her splendour on the night.”

Absorbed in these and similar inquiries, and living happily on “herbs and frugal fare,” Iccius realises the noble promise of his youth; and Horace, in writing to him (Epist., I. 12), encourages him in his disregard of wealth by some of those hints for contentment which the poet never tires of reproducing :—

“ Let no care trouble you; for poor  
That man is not, who can insure  
Whate’er for life is needful found.  
Let your digestion be but sound,

Your side unwrung by spasm or stitch,  
 Your foot unconscious of a twitch ;  
 And could you be more truly blest,  
 Though of the wealth of kings possessed ?”

It must have been pleasant to Horace to find even one among his friends illustrating in his life this modest Socratic creed ; for he is so constantly enforcing it, in every variety of phrase and metaphor, that while we must conclude that he regarded it as the one doctrine most needful for his time, we must equally conclude that he found it utterly disregarded. All round him wealth, wealth, wealth, was the universal aim : wealth, to build fine houses in town, and villas at Præneste or Baiæ ; wealth, to stock them with statues, old bronzes (mostly fabrications from the Wardour Streets of Athens or Rome), ivories, pictures, gold plate, pottery, tapestry, stuffs from the looms of Tyre, and other *articles de luxe* ; wealth, to give gorgeous dinners, and wash them down with the costliest wines ; wealth, to provide splendid equipages, to forestall the front seats in the theatre, as we do opera-boxes on the grand tier, and so get a few yards nearer to the emperor’s chair, or gain a closer view of the favourite actor or dancer of the day ; wealth, to secure a wife with a fortune and a pedigree ; wealth to attract gadfly friends, who will consume your time, eat your dinners, drink your wines, and then abuse them, and who will with amiable candour regale their circle by quizzing your foibles, or slandering your taste, if they are even so kind as to spare your character. “Gold, sovereign gold,” he says (Epistles, I. 6),

“ Brings friends, birth, beauty, power,  
 Credit, a wife—a wife, too, with a dower.

Your moneyed man is wholly without flaw,  
His manners perfect, and his sayings law."

And to achieve this wealth, no sacrifice was to be spared—time, happiness, health, honour itself. "*Rem facias, rem! Si possis recte, si non, quocunque modo rem:*"—

"Get money, money still,  
And then let Virtue follow, if she will."

Wealth sought in this spirit, and for such ends, of course brought no more enjoyment to the contemporaries of Horace than we see it doing to our own. And not the least evil of the prevailing mania, then as now, was, that it robbed life of its simplicity, and of the homely friendliness on which so much of its pleasure depends. People lived for show—to propitiate others, not to satisfy their own better instincts or their genuine convictions; and straining after the shadow of enjoyment, they let the reality slip from their grasp. They never "were, but always to be, blest." It was the old story, which the world is continually re-enacting, while the sage stands by, and marvels at its folly, and preaches what we call commonplaces, in a vain endeavour to modify or to prevent it. But the wisdom of life consists of commonplaces, which we should all be much the better for working into our practice, instead of complacently sneering at them as platitudes.<sup>1</sup> Horace abounds in commonplaces, and on no theme more than this. He has no divine law of duty to appeal to, as we have—no assured hereafter to which he may

<sup>1</sup> "Le monde changerait de face si les lieux communs de la morale devenaient la règle commune de notre conduite."

"J'ai un profond respect pour les vérités morales qui courent les rues."—M. Silvain van de Weyer's 'Pensées Diverses,' pp. 104, 105.

point the minds of men ; but he presses strongly home their folly, in so far as this world is concerned. To what good, he asks, all this turmoil and disquiet? No man truly possesses more than he is able thoroughly to enjoy. Grant that you roll in gold, or, by accumulating land, become, in Hamlet's phrase, "spacious in the possession of dirt." What pleasure will you extract from these, which a moderate estate will not yield in equal, if not greater, measure? You fret yourself to acquire your wealth—you fret yourself lest you should lose it. It robs you of your health, your ease of mind, your freedom of thought and action. Riches will not bribe inexorable death to spare you. At any hour that great leveller may sweep you away into darkness and dust, and what will it then avail you, that you have wasted all your hours, and foregone all wholesome pleasure, in adding ingot to ingot, or acre to acre, for your heirs to squander? Set a bound, then, to your desires : think not of how much others have, but of how much which they have you can do perfectly well without. Be not the slave of show or circumstance, "but in yourself possess your own desire." Do not lose the present in vain perplexities about the future. If fortune lours to-day, she may smile to-morrow ; and when she lavishes her gifts upon you, cherish an humble heart, and so fortify yourself against her caprice. Keep a rein upon all your passions—upon covetousness above all ; for once that has you within its clutch, farewell for ever to the light heart and the sleep that comes unbidden, to the open eye that drinks in delight from the beauty and freshness and infinite variety of nature, to the unclouded mind that judges justly and serenely of men and things.

Enjoy wisely, for then only you enjoy thoroughly. Live each day as though it were your last. Mar not your life by a hopeless quarrel with destiny. It will be only too brief at the best, and the day is at hand when its inequalities will be redressed, and king and peasant, pauper and millionaire, be huddled, poor shivering phantoms, in one undistinguishable crowd, across the melancholy Styx, to the judgment-hall of Minos.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PREVAILING BELIEF IN ASTROLOGY.—HORACE'S VIEWS OF  
A HEREAFTER.—RELATIONS WITH MÆCENAS.—BELIEF  
IN THE PERMANENCE OF HIS OWN FAME.

“WHEN all looks fair about,” says Sir Thomas Browne, “and thou seest not a cloud so big as a hand to threaten thee, forget not the wheel of things; think of sudden vicissitudes, but beat not thy brains to foreknow them.” It was characteristic of an age of luxury that it should be one of superstition and mental disquietude, eager to penetrate the future, and credulous in its belief of those who pretended to unveil its secrets. In such an age astrology naturally found many dupes. Rome was infested with professors of that so-called science, who had flocked thither from the East, and were always ready, like other oracles, to supply responses acceptable to their votaries.<sup>1</sup> In what contempt Horace held their prognostications the following Ode (I. 11) very clearly indicates. The women of Rome, according to Juvenal (Sat. VI.), were great believers in astrology, and carried manuals of it on

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of astrologers, Tacitus says (Hist. I. 22): “Genus hominum potentibus infidum, sperantibus fallax, quod in civitate nostra et relabitur semper, et retinebitur.”

their persons, which they consulted before they took an airing or broke their fast. Possibly on this account Horace addressed the ode to a lady. But in such things, and not under the Roman Empire only, there have always been, as La Fontaine says, "*bon nombre d'hommes qui sont femmes.*" If Augustus, and his great general and statesman Agrippa, had a Theogenes to forecast their fortunes, so the first Napoleon had his Madame Lenormand.

"Ask not—such lore's forbidden—

What destined term may be  
Within the future hidden

For us, Leuconœ.

Both thou and I

Must quickly die !

Content thee, then, nor madly hope

To wrest a false assurance from Chaldean horoscope.

Far nobler, better were it,

Whate'er may be in store,

With soul serene to bear it,

If winters many more

Jove spare for thee,

Or this shall be

The last, that now with sullen roar

Scatters the Tuscan surge in foam upon the rock-bound shore.

Be wise, your spirit firing

With cups of tempered wine,

And hopes afar aspiring

In compass brief confine,

Use all life's powers ;

The envious hours

Fly as we talk ; then live to-day,

Nor fondly to to-morrow trust more than you must or may."

In the verses of Horace we are perpetually reminded that our life is compassed round with darkness, but he will not suffer this darkness to overshadow his cheer-

fulness. On the contrary, the beautiful world, and the delights it offers, are made to stand out, as it were, in brighter relief against the gloom of Orcus. Thus, for example, this very gloom is made the background in the following Ode (I. 4) for the brilliant pictures which crowd on the poet's fancy with the first burst of Spring. Here, he says, O Sestius, all is fresh and joyous, luxuriant and lovely! Be happy, drink in "at every pore the spirit of the season," while the roses are fresh in your hair, and the wine-cup flashes ruby in your hand. Yonder lies Pluto's meagrely appointed mansion, and filmy shadows of the dead are waiting for you there, to swell their joyless ranks. To that unlovely region you must go, alas! too soon; but the golden present is yours, so drain it of its sweets.

"As biting Winter flies, lo, Spring with sunny skies,  
 And balmy airs! and barks long dry put out again from shore;  
 Now the ox forsakes his byre, and the husbandman his fire,  
 And daisy-dappled meadows bloom where winter frosts lay hoar.

By Cytherea led, while the moon shines overhead,  
 The Nymphs and Graces, hand in hand, with alternating feet  
 Shake the ground, while swinking Vulcan strikes the sparkles fierce and  
 red  
 From the forges of the Cyclops, with reiterated beat.

'Tis the time with myrtle green to bind our glistening locks,  
 Or with flowers, wherein the loosened earth herself hath newly  
 dressed,  
 And to sacrifice to Faunus in some glade amidst the rocks  
 A yearling lamb, or else a kid, if such delight him best.

Death comes alike to all—to the monarch's lordly hall,  
 Or the hovel of the beggar, and his summons none shall stay.  
 O Sestius, happy Sestius! use the moments as they pass;  
 Far-reaching hopes are not for us, the creatures of a day.



Thee soon shall night enshroud ; and the Manes' phantom crowd,  
 And the starveling house unbeautiful of Pluto shut thee in ;  
 And thou shalt not banish care by the ruddy wine-cup there,  
 Nor woo the gentle Lycidas, whom all are mad to win."

A modern would no more think of using such images as those of the last two verses to stimulate the festivity of his friends than he would of placing, like the old Egyptians, a skull upon his dinner-table, or of decorating his ball-room with Holbein's "Dance of Death." We rebuke our pride or keep our vanities in check by the thought of death, and our poets use it to remind us that

"The glories of our blood and state  
 Are shadows, not substantial things."

Horace does this too ; but out of the sad certainty of mortality he seems to extract a keener zest for the too brief enjoyment of the flying hours. Why is this? Probably because by the pagan mind life on this side the grave was regarded as a thing more precious, more noble, than the life beyond. That there was a life beyond was undoubtedly the general belief. "*Sunt aliquid Manes ; letum non omnia finit, Luridaque evictos effugit umbra rogos,*"—

{ "The Manes are no dream ; death closes not  
 Our all of being, and the wan-visaged shade  
 Escapes unscathed from the funereal fires," }

says Propertius (Eleg. IV. 7) ; and unless this were so, there would be no meaning whatever in the whole pagan idea of Hades—in the "*domus exilis Plutonia* ;" in the Hermes driving the spirits of the dead across the Styx ; in the "*judicantem Æacum, sedesque discretas piorum*"—the "Æacus dispensing doom, and the Elysian Fields

serene" (Odes, II. 13). But this after-life was a cold, sunless, unsubstantial thing, lower in quality and degree than the full, vigorous, passionate life of this world.

The nobler spirits of antiquity, it hardly need be said, had higher dreams of a future state than this. For them, no more than for us, was it possible to rest in the conviction that their brief and troubled career on earth was to be the "be all and the end all" of existence, or that those whom they had loved and lost in death became thenceforth as though they had never been. It is idle to draw, as is often done, a different conclusion from such phrases as that after death we are a shadow and mere dust, "*pulvis et umbra sumus!*" or from Horace's bewildered cry (Odes, I. 24), when a friend of signal nobleness and purity is suddenly struck down—"Ergo *Quinctilium perpetuus sopor urget?*"—"And is Quinctilius, then, weighed down by a sleep that knows no waking?" We might as reasonably argue that Shakespeare did not believe in a life after death because he makes Prospero say—

"We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep."

Horace and Shakespeare both believed in an immortality, but it was an immortality different in its kind. Horace, indeed,—who, as a rule, is wisely silent on a question which for him had no solution, however much it may have engaged his speculations,—has gleams not unlike those which irradiate our happier creed, as when he writes (Odes, III. 2) of "*Virtus, recludens immeritis mori, cælum negata tentat iter via*"—

“Worth, which heaven’s gates to those unbars  
Who never should have died,  
A pathway cleaves among the stars  
To meaner souls denied.”

But they are only gleams, impassioned hopes, yearnings of the unsatisfied soul in its search for some solution of the great mystery of life. To him, therefore, it was of more moment than it was to us, to make the most of the present, and to stimulate his relish for what it has to give by contrasting it with a phantasmal future, in which no single faculty of enjoyment should be left.

Take from life the time spent in hopes or fears or regrets, and how small the residue! For the same reason, therefore, that he prized life intensely, Horace seems to have resolved to keep these consumers of its hours as much at bay as possible. He would not look too far forward even for a pleasure; for Hope, he knew, comes never unaccompanied by her twin sister Fear. Like the Persian poet, Omar Khayyám, this is ever in his thoughts—

“What boots it to repeat,  
How Time is slipping underneath our feet?  
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday,  
Why fret about them if To-day be sweet?”

To-day—that alone is ours. Let us welcome and note what it brings, and, if good, enjoy it; if evil, endure. Let us, in any case, keep our eyes and senses open, and not lose their impressions in dreaming of an irretrievable past or of an impenetrable future. “Write it on your heart,” says Emerson (*‘Society and Solitude’*), “that every day is the best day in the year. No man has learned anything rightly until he knows that every day

is Doomsday. . . . Ah, poor dupe! will you never learn that as soon as the irrecoverable years have woven their blue glories between To-day and us, these passing hours shall glitter, and draw us, as the wildest romance and the homes of beauty and poetry?" Horace would have hailed a brother in the philosopher of New England.

Even in inviting Mæcenas to his Sabine farm (Odes, III. 29), he does not think it out of place to remind the minister of state, worn with the cares of government, and looking restlessly ahead to anticipate its difficulties, that it may, after all, be wiser not to look so far ahead, or to trouble himself about contingencies which may never arise. We must not think that Horace undervalued that essential quality of true statesmanship, the "*animus rerum prudens*" (Odes, IV. 9), the forecasting spirit that "looks into the seeds of Time," and reads the issues of events while they are still far off. He saw and prized the splendid fruits of the exercise of this very power in the growing tranquillity and strength of the Roman empire. But the wisest may over-study a subject. Mæcenas may have been working too hard, and losing under the pressure something of his usual calmness; and Horace, while urging him to escape from town for a few days, may have had it in view to insinuate the suggestion, that Jove smiles, not at the common mortal merely, but even at the sagacious statesman, who is over-anxious about the future—"ultra fas trepidat"—and to remind him that, after all,

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we may."

Mæcenas was of a melancholy temperament, and liable

to great depression of spirits. Not only was his health at no time robust, but he was constitutionally prone to fever, which more than once proved nearly fatal to him. On his first appearance in the theatre after one of these dangerous attacks, he was received with vehement cheers, and Horace alludes twice to this incident in his Odes, as if he knew that it had given especial pleasure to his friend. To mark the event the poet laid up in his cellar a jar of Sabine wine, and some years afterwards he invites Mæcenas to come and partake of it in this charming lyric (Odes, I. 20):—

“Our common Sabine wine shall be  
The only drink I'll give to thee,  
In modest goblets, too;  
'Twas stored in crock of Grecian delf,  
Dear knight Mæcenas, by myself,  
That very day when through  
The theatre thy plaudits rang,  
And sportive echo caught the clang,  
And answered from the banks  
Of thine own dear paternal stream,  
Whilst Vatican renewed the theme  
Of homage and of thanks!  
Old Cæcuban, the very best,  
And juice in vats Calenian pressed,  
You drink at home, I know:  
My cups no choice Falernian fills,  
Nor unto them do Formiæ's hills  
Impart a tempered glow.”

About the same time that Mæcenas recovered from this fever, Horace made a narrow escape from being killed by the fall of a tree, and, what to him was a great aggravation of the disaster, upon his own beloved farm (Odes, II. 13). He links the two events together as a marked coincidence in the following Ode (II. 17). His

friend had obviously been a prey to one of his fits of low spirits, and vexing the kindly soul of the poet by gloomy anticipations of an early death. Suffering, as Mæcenas did, from those terrible attacks of sleeplessness to which he was subject, and which he tried ineffectually to soothe by the splash of falling water and the sound of distant music,<sup>1</sup> such misgivings were only too natural. The case was too serious this time for Horace to think of rallying his friend into a brighter humour. He may have even seen good cause to share his fears; for his heart is obviously moved to its very depths, and his sympathy and affection well out in words, the pathos of which is still as fresh as the day they first came with comfort to the saddened spirits of Mæcenas himself.

“Why wilt thou kill me with thy boding fears?

Why, oh Mæcenas, why?

Before thee lies a train of happy years:

Yes, nor the gods nor I

Could brook that thou shouldst first be laid in dust,

Who art my stay, my glory, and my trust!

Ah! if untimely Fate should snatch thee hence,

Thee, of my soul a part,

Why should I linger on, with deadened sense,

And ever-aching heart,

A worthless fragment of a fallen shrine?

No, no, one day shall see thy death and mine!

Think not that I have sworn a bootless oath;

Yes, we shall go, shall go,

Hand linked in hand, whene'er thou leadest, both

The last sad road below!

Me neither the Chimæra's fiery breath,

Nor Gyges, even could Gyges rise from death,

<sup>1</sup> Had Horace this in his mind when he wrote “*Non avium citharæque cantus somnum reducent*”?—(Odes, III. 1.)

“Nor song of birds, nor music of the lyre,  
Shall his lost sleep restore.”

With all his hundred hands from thee shall sever ;  
For in such sort it hath  
Pleased the dread Fates, and Justice potent ever,  
To interweave our path.<sup>1</sup>

Beneath whatever aspect thou wert born,  
Libra, or Scorpion fierce, or Capricorn,

The blustering tyrant of the western deep,  
This well I know, my friend,  
Our stars in wondrous wise one orbit keep,  
And in one radiance blend.  
From thee were Saturn's baleful rays afar  
Averted by great Jove's refulgent star,

And His hand stayed Fate's downward-swooping wing,  
When thrice with glad acclaim  
The teeming theatre was heard to ring,  
And thine the honoured name :  
So had the falling timber laid me low,  
But Pan in mercy warded off the blow,

Pan who keeps watch o'er easy souls like mine.  
Remember, then, to rear  
In gratitude to Jove a votive shrine,  
And slaughter many a steer,  
Whilst I, as fits, an humbler tribute pay,  
And a meek lamb upon his altar lay."

What the poet, in this burst of loving sympathy, said would happen, did happen almost as he foretold it. Mæcenas "first deceased;" and Horace, like the wife in the quaint, tender, old epitaph,

"For a little tried  
To live without him, liked it not, and died."

But this was not till many years after this Ode was written, which it must have been about the year B.C. 36, when Horace was thirty-nine. Mæcenas lived for seven-

<sup>1</sup> So Cowley, in his poem on the death of Mr William Harvey :—

"He was my friend, the truest friend on earth ;  
A strong and mighty influence joined our birth."

teen years afterwards, and often and often, we may believe, turned to read the Ode, and be refreshed by it, when his pulse was low, and his heart sick and weary.

Horace included it in the first series of the Odes, that containing Books I. and II., which he gave to the world (B.C. 24). The first of these Odes, like the first of the Satires, is addressed to Mæcenas. They had for the most part been written, and were, no doubt, separately in circulation, several years before. That they should have met with success was certain; for the accomplished men who led society in Rome must have felt their beauty even more keenly than the scholars of a more recent time. These lyrics brought the music of Greece, which was their ideal, into their native verse; and a feeling of national pride must have helped to augment their admiration. Horace had tuned his ear upon the lyres of Sappho and Alcæus. He had even in his youth essayed to imitate them in their own tongue,—a mistake as great as for Goethe or Heine to have tried to put their lyrical inspiration into the language of Herrick or of Burns. But Horace was preserved from perseverance in this mistake by his natural good sense, or, as he puts it himself, with a fair poetic licence (Satires, I. 10), by Rome's great founder Quirinus warning him in a dream, that

“To think of adding to the mighty throng  
Of the great paragons of Grecian song,  
Were no less mad an act than his who should  
Into a forest carry logs of wood.”

These exercises may not, however, have been without their value in enabling him to transfuse the melodic



rhythm of the Greeks into his native verse. And as he was the first to do this successfully, if we except Catullus in some slight but exquisite poems, so he was the last. "Of lyrists," says Quintilian, "Horace is alone, one might say, worthy to be read. For he has bursts of inspiration, and is full of playful delicacy and grace; and in the variety of his images, as well as in expression, shows a most happy daring." Time has confirmed the verdict; and it has recently found eloquent expression in the words of one of our greatest scholars:—

"Horace's style," says Mr H. A. J. Munro, in the introduction to his edition of the poet, "is throughout his own, borrowed from none who preceded him, successfully imitated by none who came after him. The Virgilian heroic was appropriated by subsequent generations of poets, and adapted to their purposes with signal success. The hendecasyllable and scazon of Catullus became part and parcel of the poetic heritage of Rome, and Martial employs them only less happily than their matchless creator. But the moulds in which Horace cast his lyrical and his satirical thoughts were broken at his death. The style neither of Persius nor of Juvenal has the faintest resemblance to that of their common master. Statius, whose hendecasyllables are passable enough, has given us one Alcaic and one Sapphic ode, which recall the bald and constrained efforts of a modern schoolboy. I am sure he could not have written any two consecutive stanzas of Horace; and if he could not, who could?"

Before he published the first two books of his Odes, Horace had fairly felt his wings, and knew they could carry him gracefully and well. He no longer hesitates, as he had done while a writer of Satires only (p. lxi), to claim the title of poet; but at the same time he throws

himself, in his introductory Ode, with a graceful deference, upon the judgment of Mæcenas. Let that only seal his lyrics with approval, and he will feel assured of his title to rank with the great sons of song :—

“ Do thou but rank me 'mong  
The sacred bards of lyric song,  
I'll soar beyond the lists of time,  
And strike the stars with head sublime.”

In the last Ode, also adressed to Mæcenas, of the Second Book, the poet gives way to a burst of joyous anticipation of future fame, figuring himself as a swan soaring majestically across all the then known regions of the world. When he puts forth the Third Book several years afterwards, he closes it with a similar pæan of triumph, which, unlike most prophecies of the kind, has been completely fulfilled. In both he alludes to the lowliness of his birth, speaking of himself in the former as a child of poor parents—“*pauperum sanguis parentum* ;” in the latter as having risen to eminence from a mean estate—“*ex humili potens*.” These touches of egotism, the sallies of some brighter hour, are not merely venial ; they are delightful in a man so habitually modest.

“ I've reared a monument, my own,  
More durable than brass ;  
Yea, kingly pyramids of stone  
In height it doth surpass.

Rain shall not sap, nor driving blast  
Disturb its settled base,  
Nor countless ages rolling past  
Its symmetry deface.

I shall not wholly die. Some part,  
Nor that a little, shall  
Escape the dark Destroyer's dart,  
And his grim festival.

For long as with his Vestals mute  
Rome's Pontifex shall climb  
The Capitol, my fame shall shoot  
Fresh buds through future time.

Where brawls loud Aufidus, and came  
Parched Daunus erst, a horde  
Of rustic boors to sway, my name  
Shall be a household word ;

As one who rose from mean estate,  
The first with poet fire  
Æolic song to modulate  
To the Italian lyre.

Then grant, Melpomene, thy son  
Thy guerdon proud to wear,  
And Delphic laurels, duly won,  
Bind thou upon my hair !"

## CHAPTER IX.

HORACE'S RELATIONS WITH AUGUSTUS.—HIS LOVE  
OF INDEPENDENCE.

No intimate friend of Mæcenas was likely to be long a stranger to Augustus; and it is most improbable that Augustus, who kept up his love of good literature amid all the distractions of conquest and empire, should not have early sought the acquaintance of a man of such conspicuous ability as Horace. But when they first became known to each other is uncertain. In more than one of the Epodes Horace speaks of him, but not in terms to imply personal acquaintance. Some years further on it is different. When Trebatius (Satires, II. 1) is urging the poet, if write he must, to renounce satire, and to sing of Cæsar's triumphs, from which he would reap gain as well as glory, Horace replies,—

“ Most worthy sir, that's just the thing  
I'd like especially to sing;  
But at the task my spirits faint,  
For 'tis not every one can paint  
Battalions, with their bristling wall  
Of pikes, and make you see the Gaul,  
With shivered spear, in death-throe bleed,  
Or Parthian stricken from his steed.”

Then why not sing, rejoins Trebatius, his justice and his fortitude—

“Like sage Lucilius, in his lays  
To Scipio Africanus' praise”?

The reply is that of a man who had obviously been admitted to personal contact with the Cæsar, and who, with instinctive good taste, recoiled from doing what he knew would be unacceptable to him, unless called for by some very special occasion :—

“ When time and circumstance suggest,  
I shall not fail to do my best ;  
But never words of mine shall touch  
Great Cæsar's ear, but only such  
As are to the occasion due,  
And spring from my conviction, too ;  
For stroke him with an awkward hand,  
And he kicks out—you understand ?”

an allusion, no doubt, to the impatience entertained by Augustus, to which Suetonius alludes, of the indiscreet panegyrics of poetasters by which he was persecuted. The gossips of Rome clearly believed (*Satires*, II. 6) that the poet was intimate with Cæsar ; for he is “so close to the gods”—that is, on such a footing with Augustus and his chief advisers—that they assume, as a matter of course, he must have early tidings of all the most recent political news at first hand. However this may be, by the time the *Odes* were published Horace had overcome any previous scruples, and sang in no measured terms the praises of him, the back-stroke of whose rebuke he had professed himself so fearful of provoking.

All Horace's prepossessions must have been against

one of the leaders before whose opposition Brutus, the ideal hero of his youthful enthusiasm, had succumbed. Neither were the sanguinary proscriptions and ruthless spoliations by which the triumvirate asserted its power, and from a large share of the guilt of which Augustus could not shake himself free, calculated to conciliate his regards. He had much to forget and to forgive before he could look without aversion upon the blood-stained avenger of the great Cæsar. But in times like those in which Horace's lot was cast, we do not judge of men or things as we do when social order is unbroken, when political crime is never condoned, and the usual standards of moral judgment are rigidly enforced. Horace probably soon came to see, what is now very apparent, that when Brutus and his friends struck down Cæsar, they dealt a deathblow to what, but for this event, might have proved to be a well-ordered government. Liberty was dead long before Cæsar aimed at supremacy. It was dead when individuals like Sylla and Marius had become stronger than the laws; and the death of Cæsar was, therefore, but the prelude to fresh disasters, and to the ultimate investiture with absolute power of whoever, among the competitors for it, should come triumphantly out of what was sure to be a protracted and a sanguinary struggle.

In what state did Horace find Italy after his return from Philippi? Drenched in the blood of its citizens, desolated by pillage, harassed by daily fears of internecine conflict at home and of invasion from abroad, its sovereignty a stake played for by political gamblers. In such a state of things it was no longer the question,

how the old Roman constitution was to be restored, but how the country itself was to be saved from ruin. Prestige was with the nephew of the Cæsar whose memory the Roman populace had almost from his death worshipped as divine; and whose conspicuous ability and address, as well as those of his friends, naturally attracted to his side the ablest survivors of the party of Brutus. The very course of events pointed to him as the future chief of the state. Lepidus, by the sheer weakness and indecision of his character, soon went to the wall; and the power of Antony was weakened by his continued absence from Rome, and ultimately destroyed by the malign influence exerted upon his character by the fascinations of the Egyptian Queen Cleopatra. The disastrous failure of his Parthian expedition (B.C. 36), and the tidings that reached Rome from time to time of the mad extravagance of his private life, of his abandonment of the character of a Roman citizen, and his assumption of the barbaric pomp and habits of an oriental despot, made men look to his great rival as the future head of the state, especially as they saw that rival devoting all his powers to the task of reconciling divisions and restoring peace to a country exhausted by a long series of civil broils, of giving security to life and property at home, and making Rome once more a name of awe throughout the world. Was it, then, otherwise than natural that Horace, in common with many of his friends, should have been not only content to forget the past, with its bloody and painful records, but should even have attached himself cordially to the party of Augustus? Whatever the private aims of the Cæsar may have been,

his public life showed that he had the welfare of his country strongly at heart, and the current of events had made it clear that he at least was alone able to end the strife of faction by assuming the virtual supremacy of the state.

Pollio, Messalla, Varus, and others of the Brutus party, have not been denounced as renegades because they arrived at a similar conclusion, and lent the whole influence of their abilities and their names to the cause of Augustus. Horace has not been so fortunate; and because he has expressed—what was no doubt the prevailing feeling of his countrymen—gratitude to Augustus for quelling civil strife, for bringing glory to the empire, and giving peace, security, and happiness to his country by the power of his arms and the wisdom of his administration, the poet has been called a traitor to the nobler principles of his youth—an obsequious flatterer of a man whom he ought to have denounced to posterity as a tyrant. *Adroit esclave* is the epithet applied to him in this respect by Voltaire, who idolises him as a moralist and poet. But it carries little weight in the mouth of the cynic who could fawn with more than courtierly complaisance on a Frederick or a Catherine, and weave graceful flatteries for the Pompadour, and who “dearly loved a lord” in his practice, however he may have sneered at aristocracy in his writings. But if we put ourselves as far as we can into the poet’s place, we shall come to a much more lenient conclusion. He could, no doubt, appreciate thoroughly the advantages of a free republic or of a purely constitutional government, and would, of course, have preferred either of these for his country. But while theory



pointed in that direction, facts were all pulling the opposite way. The materials for the establishment of such a state of things did not exist in a strong middle class or an equal balance of parties. The choice lay between the anarchy of a continued strife of selfish factions, and the concentration of power in the hands of some individual who should be capable of enforcing law at home and commanding respect abroad. So at least Horace obviously thought; and surely it is reasonable to suppose that the man, whose integrity and judgment in all other matters are indisputable, was more likely than the acutest critic or historian of modern times can possibly be to form a just estimate of what was the possible best for his country, under the actual circumstances of the time.

Had Horace at once become the panegyrist of the Cæsar, the sincerity of his convictions might have been open to question. But thirteen years at least had elapsed between the battle of Philippi and the composition of the Second Ode of the First Book, which is the first direct acknowledgment by Horace of Augustus as the chief of the state. This Ode is directly inspired by gratitude for the cessation of civil strife, and the skilful administration which had brought things to the point when the whole fighting force of the kingdom, which had so long been wasted in that strife, could be directed to spreading the glory of the Roman name, and securing its supremacy throughout its conquered provinces. The allusions to Augustus in this and others of the earlier Odes are somewhat cold and formal in their tone. There is a visible increase in glow and energy in those of a later date, when, as years went on, the Cæsar established

fresh claims on the gratitude of Rome by his firm, sagacious, and moderate policy, by the general prosperity which grew up under his administration, by the success of his arms, by the great public works which enhanced the splendour and convenience of the capital, by the restoration of the laws, and by his zealous endeavour to stem the tide of immorality which had set in during the protracted disquietudes of the civil wars. It is true that during this time Augustus was also establishing the system of Imperialism, which contained in itself the germs of tyranny, with all its brutal excesses on the one hand, and its debasing influence upon the subject nation on the other. But we who have seen into what it developed must remember that these baneful fruits of the system were of lengthened growth; and Horace, who saw no farther into the future than the practical politicians of his time, may be forgiven if he dwelt only upon the immediate blessings which the government of Augustus effected, and the peace and security which came with a tenfold welcome after the long agonies of the civil wars.

The glow and sincerity of feeling of which we have spoken are conspicuous in the following Ode (IV. 2), addressed to Iulus Antonius, the son of the triumvir, of whose powers as a poet nothing is known beyond the implied recognition of them contained in this Ode. The Sicambri, with two other German tribes, had crossed the Rhine, laid waste part of the Roman territory in Gaul, and inflicted so serious a blow on Lollius, the Roman legate, that Augustus himself repaired to Gaul to retrieve the defeat and resettle the province. This he accom-

plished triumphantly (B.C. 17); and we may assume that the Ode was written while the tidings of his success were still fresh, and the Romans, who had been greatly agitated by the defeat of Lollius, were looking eagerly forward to his return. Apart from its other merits, the Ode is interesting from the estimate Horace makes in it of his own powers, and his avowal of the labour which his verses cost him.

“ Iulus, he who'd rival Pindar's fame,  
On waxen wings doth sweep  
The Empyréan steep,  
To fall like Icarus, and with his name  
Endue the glassy deep.

Like to a mountain stream, that roars  
From bank to bank along,  
When autumn rains are strong,  
So deep-mouthed Pindar lifts his voice, and pours  
His fierce tumultuous song.

Worthy Apollo's laurel wreath,  
Whether he strike the lyre  
To love and young desire,  
While bold and lawless numbers grow beneath  
His mastering touch of fire ;

Or sings of gods, and monarchs sprung  
Of gods, that overthrew  
The Centaurs, hideous crew,  
And, fearless of the monster's fiery tongue,  
The dread Chimæra slew ;

Or those the Eléan palm doth lift  
To heaven, for wingèd steed,  
Or sturdy arm decreed,  
Giving, than hundred statues nobler gift,  
The poet's deathless meed ;

Or mourns the youth snatched from his bride,  
Extols his manhood clear,  
And to the starry sphere  
Exalts his golden virtues, scattering wide  
The gloom of Orcus drear.

When the Dircean swan doth climb  
 Into the azure sky,  
 There poised in ether high,  
 He courts each gale, and floats on wing sublime,  
 Soaring with steadfast eye.

I, like the matinee bee, that sips  
 The fragrant thyme, and strays  
 Humming through leafy ways,  
 By Tibur's sedgy banks, with trembling lips  
 Fashion my toilsome lays.

But thou, when up the sacred steep  
 Cæsar, with garlands crowned,  
 Leads the Sicambrians bound,  
 With bolder hand the echoing strings shalt sweep,  
 And bolder measures sound.

Cæsar, than whom a nobler son  
 The Fates and Heaven's kind powers  
 Ne'er gave this earth of ours,  
 Nor e'er will give, though backward time should run  
 To its first golden hours.

Thou too shalt sing the joyful days,  
 The city's festive throng,  
 When Cæsar, absent long,  
 At length returns,—the Forum's silent ways,  
 Serene from strife and wrong.

Then, though in statelier power it lack,  
 My voice shall swell the lay,  
 And sing, 'O glorious day,  
 O day thrice blest, that gives great Cæsar back  
 To Rome, from hostile fray!'

'Io Triumphe!' thrice the cry;  
 'Io Triumphe!' loud  
 Shall shout the echoing crowd  
 The city through, and to the gods on high  
 Raise incense like a cloud.

Ten bulls shall pay thy sacrifice,  
 With whom ten kine shall bleed:  
 I to the fane will lead  
 A yearling of the herd, of modest size,  
 From the luxuriant mead,

Horned like the moon, when her pale light  
Which three brief days have fed,  
She trimmeth, and dispread  
On his broad brows a spot of snowy white,  
All else a tawny red."

Augustus did not return from Gaul, as was expected when this Ode was written, but remained there for about two years. That this protracted absence caused no little disquietude in Rome is apparent from the following Ode (IV. 5):—

"From gods benign descended, thou  
Best guardian of the fates of Rome,  
Too long already from thy home  
Hast thou, dear chief, been absent now ;  
Oh, then return, the pledge redeem,  
Thou gav'st the Senate, and once more  
Its light to all the land restore ;  
For when thy face, like spring-tide's gleam,  
Its brightness on the people sheds,  
Then glides the day more sweetly by,  
A brighter blue pervades the sky,  
The sun a richer radiance spreads !  
As on her boy the mother calls,  
Her boy, whom envious tempests keep  
Beyond the vexed Carpathian deep,  
From his dear home, till winter falls,  
And still with vow and prayer she cries,  
Still gazes on the winding shore,  
So yearns the country evermore  
For Cæsar, with fond, wistful eyes.  
For safe the herds range field and fen,  
Full-headed stand the shocks of grain,  
Our sailors sweep the peaceful main,  
And man can trust his fellow-men.  
No more adulterers stain our beds,  
Laws, morals, both that taint efface,  
The husband in the child we trace,  
And close on crime sure vengeance treads.

The Parthian, under Cæsar's reign,  
 Or icy Scythian, who can dread,  
 Or all the tribes barbarian bred  
 By Germany, or ruthless Spain?

Now each man, basking on his slopes,  
 Weds to his widowed trees the vine,  
 Then, as he gaily quaffs his wine,  
 Salutes thee god of all his hopes;

And prayers to thee devoutly sends,  
 With deep libations; and, as Greece  
 Ranks Castor and great Hercules,  
 Thy godship with his Lares blends.

Oh, mayst thou on Hesperia shine,  
 Her chief, her joy, for many a day!  
 Thus, dry-lipped, thus at morn we pray,  
 Thus pray at eve, when flushed with wine."

"It was perhaps the policy of Augustus," says Maclean, "to make his absence felt; and we may believe that the language of Horace, which bears much more the impress of real feeling than of flattery, represented the sentiments of great numbers at Rome, who felt the want of that presiding genius which had brought the city through its long troubles, and given it comparative peace. There could not be a more comprehensive picture of security and rest obtained through the influence of one mind than is represented in this Ode, if we except that with which no merely mortal language can compare (Isaiah xi. and lxxv.; Micah iv.)"

We must not assume, from the reference in this and other Odes to the divine origin of Augustus, that this was seriously believed in by Horace, any more than it was by Augustus himself. Popular credulity ascribed divine honours to great men; and this was the natural growth of a religious system in which a variety of gods and demigods played so large a part. Julius Cæsar claimed—no doubt, for the purpose of impressing the

Roman populace—a direct descent from *Alma Venus Genitrix*, as Antony did from Hercules. Altars and temples were dedicated to great statesmen and generals; and the Romans, among the other things which they borrowed from the East, borrowed also the practice of conferring the honours of apotheosis upon their rulers,—the visible agents, in their estimation, of the great invisible power that governed the world. To speak of their divine descent and attributes became part of the common forms of the poetical vocabulary, not inappropriate to the exalted pitch of lyrical enthusiasm. Horace only falls into the prevailing strain, and is not compromising himself by servile flattery, as some have thought, when he speaks in this Ode of Augustus as “from gods benign descended,” and in others as “the heaven-sent son of Maia” (I. 2), or as reclining among the gods and quaffing nectar “with lip of deathless bloom” (III. 3). In lyrical poetry all this was quite in place. But when the poet contracts his wings, and drops from its empyrean to the level of the earth, he speaks to Augustus and of him simply as he thought (Epistles, II. 1)—as a man on whose shoulders the weight of empire rested, who protected the commonwealth by the vigour of his armies, and strove to grace it by “sweeter manners, purer laws.” He adds, it is true,—

“ You while in life are honoured as divine,  
And vows and oaths are taken at your shrine;  
So Rome pays honour to her man of men,  
Ne'er seen on earth before, ne'er to be seen again.”

—(Conington.)

But this is no more than a statement of a fact. Altars

were erected to Augustus, much against his will, and at these men made their prayers or plighted their oaths every day. There is not a word to imply either that Augustus took these divine honours, or that Horace joined in ascribing them, seriously.

It is of some importance to the argument in favour of Horace's sincerity and independence, that he had no selfish end to serve by standing well with Augustus. We have seen that he was more than content with the moderate fortune secured to him by Mæcenas. Wealth had no charms for him. His ambition was to make his mark as a poet. His happiness lay in being his own master. There is no trace of his having at any period been swayed by other views. What then had he to gain by courting the favour of the head of the state? But the argument goes further. When Augustus found the pressure of his private correspondence too great, as his public duties increased, and his health, never robust, began to fail, he offered Horace the post of his private secretary. The poet declined on the ground of health. He contrived to do so in such a way as to give no umbrage by the refusal; nay, the letters which are quoted in the life of Horace ascribed to Suetonius show that Augustus begged the poet to treat him on the same footing as if he had accepted the office, and actually become a member of his household. "Our friend Septimius," he says in another letter, "will tell you how much you are in my thoughts; for something led to my speaking of you before him. Neither, if you were too proud to accept my friendship, do I mean to deal with you in the same spirit."



There could have been little of the courtier in the man who was thus addressed. Horace apparently felt that Augustus and himself were likely to be better friends at a distance. He had seen enough of court life to know how perilous it is to that independence which was his dearest possession. "*Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,—Expertus metuit,*" is his ultimate conviction on this head (Epistles, I. 18)—

"Till time has made us wise, 'tis sweet to wait  
Upon the smiles and favour of the great ;  
But he that once has ventured that career  
Shrinks from its perils with instinctive fear."

In another place (Epistles, I. 10) he says, "*Fuge magna ; licet sub paupere tecto Reges et regum vita præcurrere amicos*"—

"Keep clear of courts ; a homely life transcends  
The vaunted bliss of monarchs and their friends."

—(Conington.)

But apart from such considerations, life would have lost its charm for Horace had he put himself within the trammels of official service. At no time would these have been tolerable to him ; but as he advanced into middle age, the freedom of entire independence, the refreshing solitudes of the country, leisure for study and reflection, became more and more precious to him. The excitements and gaieties and social enjoyments of Rome were all very well, but a little of them went a great way. They taxed his delicate health, and they interfered with the graver studies, to which he became daily more in-

clined as the years went by. Not all his regard for Mæcenas himself, deep as it was, could induce him to stay in town to enliven the leisure hours of the statesman by his companionship at the expense of those calm seasons of communion with nature and the books of the great men of old, in which he could indulge his irresistible craving for some solution of the great problems of life and philosophy.

Men like Mæcenas, whose power and wealth are practically unbounded, are apt to become importunate even in their friendships, and to think that everything should give way to the gratification of their wishes. Something of this spirit was obviously shown by him upon one occasion towards Horace, if we may read between the lines of one of the best of the Epistles addressed by the poet to his friend and patron. Mæcenas would appear to have expressed himself in a tone of complaint, either to the poet himself, or in some way that had reached his ears, about his prolonged absence in the country, and this in a way which implied that he considered his bounties had given him a claim upon the time of Horace which was not sufficiently considered. This could only have been a burst of momentary impatience, for the nature of Mæcenas was too generous to admit of any other supposition. But Horace felt it; and with the utmost delicacy of tact, but with a decision that left no room for mistake, he lost no time in letting Mæcenas know, that rather than brook control upon his movements, however slight, he will cheerfully forego the gifts of his friend, dear as they are, and grateful for them as he must always be. To this we owe

the exquisite Epistle which forms the Seventh of the First Book, one that should be read in direct connection with what has just been said. That Mæcenas loved his friend all the better for it—he could scarcely respect him more than he seems to have done from the first—we may be very sure.

## CHAPTER X.

DELICACY OF HORACE'S HEALTH.—HIS CHEERFULNESS.  
 —LOVE OF BOOKS.—HIS PHILOSOPHY PRACTICAL.—  
 EPISTLE TO AUGUSTUS.—DEATH.

HORACE had probably passed forty when the Epistle just referred to was written. Describing himself at forty-four (Epistles, I. 20), he says he was "prematurely grey,"—his hair having been originally black,—adding that he is

" In person small, one to whom warmth is life ;  
 In temper hasty, yet averse from strife."

His health demanded constant care ; and we find him writing (Epistles, I. 15) to a friend, to ask what sort of climate and people are to be found at Velia and Salernum,—the one a town of Lucania, the other of Campania,—as he has been ordered by his doctor to give up his favourite watering-place, Baiæ, as too relaxing. This doctor was Antonius Musa, a great apostle of the cold-water cure, by which he had saved the life of Augustus when in extreme danger. The remedy instantly became fashionable, and continued so until the Emperor's nephew, the young Marcellus, died under the treatment. Horace's inquiries are just such as a valetudinarian fond of his comforts would be likely to make :—

Which place is best supplied with corn, d'y'e think?  
Have they rain-water or fresh springs to drink?  
Their wines I care not for ; when at my farm  
I can drink any sort without much harm ;  
But at the sea I need a generous kind  
To warm my veins, and pass into my mind,  
Enrich me with new hopes, choice words supply,  
And make me comely in a lady's eye.  
Which tract is best for game? on which sea-coast  
Urchins and other fish abound the most?  
That so, when I return, my friends may see  
A sleek Phæacian<sup>1</sup> come to life in me :  
These things you needs must tell me, Vala dear,  
And I no less must act on what I hear."

—(Conington.)

Valetudinarian though he was, Horace maintains, in his later as in his early writings, a uniform cheerfulness. This never forsakes him ; for life is a boon for which he is ever grateful. The gods have allotted him an ample share of the means of enjoyment, and it is his own fault if he suffers self-created worries or desires to vex him. By the questions he puts to a friend in one of the latest of his Epistles (II. 2), we see what was the discipline he applied to himself :—

" You're not a miser : has all other vice  
Departed in the train of avarice?  
Or do ambitious longings, angry fret,  
The terror of the grave, torment you yet?  
Can you make sport of portents, gipsy crones,  
Hobgoblins, dreams, raw head and bloody bones?  
Do you count up your birthdays year by year,  
And thank the gods with gladness and blithe cheer,  
O'erlook the failings of your friends, and grow  
Gentler and better as your sand runs low?"

—(Conington.)

And to this beautiful catalogue of what should be a good

<sup>1</sup> The Phæacians were proverbially fond of good living.

man's aims, let us add the picture of himself which Horace gives us in another and earlier Epistle (I. 18) :—

“ For me, when freshened by my spring's pure cold,  
Which makes my villagers look pinched and old,  
What prayers are mine? ‘ Oh may I yet possess  
The goods I have, or, if heaven pleases, less !  
Let the few years that Fate may grant me still  
Be all my own, not held at others' will !  
Let me have books, and stores for one year hence,  
Nor make my life one flutter of suspense !’  
But I forbear ; sufficient 'tis to pray  
To Jove for what he gives and takes away ;  
Grant life, grant fortune, for myself I'll find  
That best of blessings—a contented mind.”

—(Conington.)

“ Let me have books !” These play a great part in Horace's life. They were not to him, what Montaigne calls them, “ a languid pleasure,” but rather as they were to Wordsworth—

“ A substantial world, both fresh and good,  
Round which, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,  
Our pastime and our happiness may grow.”

Next to a dear friend, they were Horace's most cherished companions. Not for amusement merely, and the listless luxury of the self-wrapt lounge, were they prized by him, but as teachers to correct his faults, to subdue his evil propensities, to develop his higher nature, to purify his life (Epistles, I. 1), and to help him towards attaining “ that best of blessings, a contented mind :” —

“ Say, is your bosom ravaged by the fire  
Of sateless avarice or of foul desire ?  
Maxims there are and spells, the pain can ease,  
And purge away nine-tenths of your disease.  
Art mad for fame? Through yonder volume spell  
Again and yet again, and you'll be well.

However coarse in grain a man may be,  
Drone, brawler, makebate, drunkard, debauchee,  
A patient ear to culture let him lend,—  
He's sure to turn out gentler in the end."

Horace's taste was as catholic in philosophy as in literature. He was of no school, but sought in the teachings of them all such principles as would make life easier, better, and happier: "*Condo et compono, quæ mox depromere possum*"—

"The sages' lore I cull where'er I may,  
And hive it up for use some future day."

He is evermore urging his friends to follow his example;—to resort like himself to these "spells,"—the *verba et voces*, by which he brought his own restless desires and disquieting aspirations into subjection, and fortified himself in the bliss of contentment. He saw they were letting the precious hours slip from their grasp,—hours that might have been so happy, but were so weighted with disquiet and weariness; and he loved his friends too well to keep silence on this theme. We, like them, it has been admirably said,<sup>1</sup> are "possessed by the ambitions, the desires, the weariness, the disquietudes, which pursued the friends of Horace. If he does not always succeed with us, any more than with them, in curing us of these, he at all events soothes and tranquilises us in the moments which we spend with him. He augments, on the other hand, the happiness of those who are already happy; and there is not one of us but feels under the obligation to him for his gentle and salutary

<sup>1</sup> 'Étude Morale et Littéraire sur les Épitres d'Horace;' par J. A. Estienne. Paris, 1851. P. 212.

lessons,—*verbaque et voces*,—for his soothing or invigorating balsams, as much as though this gifted physician of soul and body had compounded them specially for ourselves.”

When he published the First Book of Epistles he seems to have thought the time come for him to write no more lyrics (Epistles, I. 1):—

“ So verses now and all such toys I quit,  
And toil my best to find the true and fit.”

Graver habits, and a growing fastidiousness of taste, were likely to give rise to this feeling. But a poet can no more renounce his lyre than a painter his palette; and his fine “Secular Hymn,” and many of the Odes of the Fourth Book, which were written after this period, prove that, so far from suffering any decay in poetical power, he had even gained in force and originality of conception, and in that *curiosa felicitas*, that exquisite felicity of expression, which has been justly ascribed to him by Petronius. Several years afterwards, when writing of the mania for scribbling verse which had beset the Romans, as if, like Dogberry’s reading and writing, the faculty of writing poetry came by nature, he alludes to his own sins in the same direction with a touch of his old irony (Epistles, II. 1):—

“ Even I, who vow I never write a line,  
The Parthians in mendacity outshine,  
Awake before the sun is up, and call  
For pen and parchment, writing-case and all.  
Where is the man will undertake to steer,  
Who’s strange to ships, and all their sailing gear?  
Who ventures to administer a draught,  
Without due training in the doctor’s craft?”



Doctors prescribe, who understand the rules,  
And only workmen handle workmen's tools ;  
But literate and illiterate, those who can,  
And those who cannot, now write verses to a man."

Or, as Pope with a finer emphasis translates his words—

" But those who cannot write, and those who can,  
All rhyme, and scrawl, and scribble to a man."

It was very well for Horace to laugh at his own inability to abstain from verse-making, but, had he been ever so much inclined to silence, his friends would not have let him rest. Some wanted an Ode, some an Epode, some a Satire (Epistles, II. 2)—

" Three hungry guests for different dishes call,  
And how's one host to satisfy them all?"

—(Conington.)

And there was one friend, whose request it was not easy to deny. This was Augustus. Ten years after the imperial power had been placed in his hands (B.C. 17) he resolved to celebrate a great national festival in honour of his own successful career. Horace was called on to write an Ode, known in his works as the "Secular Hymn," to be sung upon the occasion by twenty-seven boys and twenty-seven girls of noble birth. "The Ode," says Maclean, "was sung at the most solemn part of the festival, while the Emperor was in person offering sacrifice at the second hour of the night, on the river-side, upon three altars, attended by the fifteen men who presided over religious affairs. The effect must have been very beautiful, and no wonder if the impression on Horace's feelings was strong and lasting." He was obviously pleased at being chosen for the task, and not without

pride—a very just one—at the way it was performed. In the Ode (IV. 6), which seems to have been a kind of prelude to the “Secular Hymn,” he anticipates that the virgins who chanted it will on their marriage-day be proud to recall the fact that they had taken part in this oratorio under his baton :—

“ When the cyclical year brought its festival days,  
My voice led the hymn of thanksgiving and praise,  
So sweet, the immortals to hear it were fain,  
And 'twas HORACE THE POET who taught me the strain !”

It was probably at the suggestion of Augustus, also, that he wrote the magnificent Fourth and Fourteenth Odes of the Fourth Book. These were written, however, to celebrate great national victories, and were pitched in the high key appropriate to the theme. But this was not enough for Augustus. He wanted something more homely and human, and was envious of the friends to whom Horace had addressed the charming Epistles of the First Book, a copy of which the poet had sent to him by the hands of a friend (Epistles, I. 13), but only to be given to the Cæsar,

“ If he be well, and in a happy mood,  
And ask to have them,—be it understood.”

And so he wrote to Horace—the letter is quoted by Suetonius—“Look you, I take it much amiss that none of your writings of this class are addressed to me. Are you afraid it will damage your reputation with posterity to be thought to have been one of my intimates?” Such a letter, had Horace been a vain man or an indiscreet, might have misled him into approaching Augustus with the freedom he courted. But he fell into no such

error. There is perfect frankness throughout the whole of the Epistle, with which he met the Emperor's request (II. 1), but the social distance between them is maintained with an emphasis which it is impossible not to feel. The Epistle opens by skilfully insinuating that, if the poet has not before addressed the Emperor, it is that he may not be suspected of encroaching on the hours which were due to the higher cares of state :—

“ Since you, alone, O Cæsar, bear the weight  
Of Rome's affairs so manifold and great,  
The country and its weal by arms defend,  
Adorn by morals and by laws amend,  
I should be guilty of a public wrong,  
If by my prattle I detained you long.”

It is not while they live, he continues, that, in the ordinary case, the worth of the great benefactors of mankind is recognised. Only after they are dead do misunderstanding and malice give way to admiration and love. Rome, it is true, has been more just. It has appreciated, and it avows, how much it owes to Augustus. But the very same people who have shown themselves wise and just in this are unable to extend the same principle to living literary genius. A poet must have been long dead and buried, or he is nought. The very flaws of old writers are cried up as beauties by pedantic critics, while the highest excellence in a writer of the day meets with no response.

“ Had Greece been given in such contempt to hold  
All that is modern, what would now be old ?  
Where would the classics be, the well-thumbed tomes,  
Which are the light and sweetness of our homes ?”

Let us then look the facts fairly in the face ; let us “ clear

our minds of cant." If a poem be bad in itself, let us say so, no matter how old or how famous it be; if it be good, let us be no less candid, though the poet be still struggling into notice among us.

Thanks, he proceeds, to our happy times, men are now devoting themselves to the arts of peace. "*Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit*"—"Her ruthless conqueror Greece has overcome." The Romans of the better class, who of old thought only of the triumphs of the forum, or of turning over their money profitably, are now bitten by a literary furor.

"Boys and grave fathers crown their brows with bays,  
And, as they sit at supper, spout their lays."

But this craze is no unmixed evil; for, take him all in all, your poet can scarcely be a bad fellow. Pulse and second bread are a banquet for him. He is sure not to be greedy or close-fisted; for to him, as Tennyson in the same spirit says, "Mellow metres are more than ten per cent." Neither is he likely to cheat his partner or his ward. He may cut a poor figure in a campaign, but he does the state good service at home.

"The bard it is, whose well-earned verses teach  
Our childhood's lisping tongue the arts of speech;  
He weans the ears of boyhood from the twang  
Of vulgar accents, and of ribald slang;  
Anon his precepts mould the heart and mind,  
And make them gentle, generous, and kind;  
Best chronicler is he of noble deeds;  
Lessons to guide us from the past he reads;  
He brings a solace to the sick man's bed,  
And even the poor by him are comforted."

Horace then goes on to sketch the rise of poetry and

the drama among the Romans, glancing, as he goes, at the perverted taste which was making the stage the vehicle of mere spectacle, and intimating his own high estimate of the dramatic writer in words which Shakespeare seems to have been meant to realise :—

“ Him foremost among poets I confess,  
Who with fictitious sorrows wrings my breast,  
Rouses my passions, calms them into rest,  
With visionary fears my soul can thrill,  
And sweep me off, as if by magic skill,  
To Thebes, to Athens,—anywhere he will.”

Here, as elsewhere, Horace treats dramatic writing as the very highest exercise of poetic genius ; and, in dwelling on it as he does, he probably felt sure of carrying with him the fullest sympathies of Augustus. For among his varied literary essays, the Emperor, like most *dilettanti*, had tried his hand upon a tragedy. Failing, however, to satisfy himself, he had the rarer wisdom to suppress it. The story of his play was that of Ajax, and when asked one day how it was getting on, he replied that his hero “ had finished his career upon a sponge ! ” — “ *Ajacem suum in spongio incubuisse.* ”

From the drama Horace proceeds to speak of the more timid race of bards, who, “ instead of being hissed and acted, would be read,” and who, himself included, are apt to do themselves harm in various ways through oversensitiveness or simplicity. Thus, for example, they will intrude their works on Augustus, when he is busy or tired ; or wince, poor sensitive rogues, if a friend ventures to take exception to a verse ; or bore him by repeating, unasked, one or other of their pet passages, or by complaints that their happiest thoughts and most highly

polished turns escape unnoticed ; or, worse folly than all, they will expect to be sent for by Augustus the moment he comes across their poems, and told “to starve no longer, and go writing on.” Yet, continues Horace, it is better the whole tribe should be disappointed, than that a great man’s glory should be dimmed, like Alexander’s, who made the mistake of letting himself be sung of by a bad poet like Chærilus. Into such a mistake Augustus was not likely to fall, who had proved the soundness of his literary taste by taking to his heart two men of such undoubted genius as Virgil and Varius. Only men of rare gifts like theirs are the fit laureates of the Emperor’s great achievements ; and in this way the poet returns, like a skilful composer, to the *motif* with which he set out—distrust of his own ability, which has restrained, and must continue to restrain, him from pressing himself and his small poetic powers upon the Emperor’s notice.

In the other poems which belong to this period—the Second Epistle of the Second Book, and the Epistle to the Pisos generally known as the *Ars Poetica*—Horace confines himself almost exclusively to purely literary topics. The dignity of literature was never better vindicated than in these Epistles. In Horace’s estimation it was a thing always to be approached with reverence. Mediocrity in it was intolerable. Genius is much, but genius without art will not win immortality ; “for a good poet’s made, as well as born.” There must be a working up to the highest models, a resolute intolerance of anything slight or slovenly, a fixed purpose to put what the writer has to express into forms at once the most

beautiful, suggestive, and compact. The mere trick of literary composition Horace holds exceedingly cheap. Brilliant nonsense finds no allowance from him. Truth—truth in feeling, in character, in thought, and incident—must be present, if the work is to have any value. “*Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons,*”—

“Of writing well, be sure the secret lies  
In wisdom, therefore study to be wise.”

—(Conington.)

Whatever the form of composition—heroic, didactic, lyric, or dramatic—it must be pervaded by unity of feeling and design; and no style is good, or illustration enduring, which either overlays or does not harmonise with the subject in hand.

The Epistle to the Pisos does not profess to be a complete exposition of the poet's art. It glances only at small sections of that wide theme. So far as it goes it is all gold, full of most instructive hints for a sound critical taste and a pure literary style, which are as applicable now as the day when the Sosii first gave them to the Roman public. It was probably meant to cure the younger Piso of that passion for writing verse which had, as we have seen, spread like a plague among the Romans, and which made a visit to the public baths a penance to critical ears,—for there the poetasters were always sure of an audience,—and added new terrors to the already sufficiently formidable horrors of the Roman banquet.<sup>1</sup> When we find an experienced critic like Horace

<sup>1</sup> This theory has been worked out with great ability by the late M. A. Baron, in his ‘*Épître d’Horace aux Pisons sur l’Art Poétique*’—Bruxelles, 1857; which is accompanied by a masterly translation and notes of great value:

urging young Piso, as he does, to keep what he writes by him for nine years, the conclusion is irresistible, that he hoped by that time the writer would see the wisdom of suppressing his crude lucubrations altogether. No one knew better than Horace that really fine literary work never wants such protracted mellowing. Indeed the handling and rehandling of a man's verses at intervals of years has done, and all but certainly must do, serious injury even to poetry of the highest order.

Soon after this poem was written the great palace on the Esquiline lost its master. He died (B.C. 8) in the middle of the year, bequeathing his poet-friend to the care of Augustus in the words "*Horâti Flacci, ut mei, esto memor,*" — "Bear Horace in your memory as you would myself." But the legacy was not long upon the Emperor's hands. Seventeen years before, Horace had written—

"Think not that I have sworn a bootless oath ;  
Yes, we shall go, shall go,  
Hand linked in hand, where'er thou leadest, both  
The last sad road below."

The lines must have rung in the poet's ears like a sad refrain. The Digentia lost its charm ; he could not see its crystal waters for the shadows of Charon's rueful stream. The prattle of his loved Bandusian spring could not wean his thoughts from the vision of his other self wandering unaccompanied along that "last sad road." We may fancy that Horace was thenceforth little seen in his accustomed haunts. He who had so often soothed the sorrows of other bereaved hearts, answered with a wistful smile to the friendly consolations of the many



that loved him. His work was done. It was time to go away. Not all the skill of Orpheus could recall him whom he had lost. The welcome end came sharply and suddenly; and one day, when the bleak November wind was whirling down the oak-leaves on his well-loved brook, the servants of his Sabine farm heard that they should no more see the good, cheery master, whose pleasant smile and kindly word had so often made their labours light. There was many a sad heart, too, we may be sure, in Rome, when the wit who never wounded, the poet who ever charmed, the friend who never failed, was laid in a corner of the Esquiline, close to the tomb of his "dear knight Mæcenas." He died on the 27th November B.C. 8, the kindly, lonely man, leaving to Augustus what little he possessed. One would fain trust his own words were inscribed upon his tomb, as in the supreme hour the faith they expressed was of a surety strong within his heart,—

NON OMNIS MORIAR.

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No writer of antiquity has taken a stronger hold upon the modern mind than Horace. The causes of this are manifold, but three may be especially noted: his broad human sympathies, his vigorous common-sense, and his consummate mastery of expression. The mind must be either singularly barren or singularly cold to which Horace does not speak. The scholar, the statesman, the soldier, the man of the world, the town-bred man, the lover of the country, the thoughtful and the careless, he

who reads much and he who reads little, all find in his pages more or less to amuse their fancy, to touch their feelings, to quicken their observation, to nerve their convictions, to put into happy phrase the deductions of their experience. His poetical sentiment is not pitched in too high a key for the unimaginative, but it is always so genuine that the most imaginative feel its charm. His wisdom is deeper than it seems, so simple, practical, and direct as it is in its application; and his moral teaching more spiritual and penetrating than is apparent on a superficial study. He does not fall into the common error of didactic writers, of laying upon life more than it will bear; but he insists that it shall at least bear the fruits of integrity, truth, honour, justice, self-denial, and brotherly charity. Over and above the mere literary charm of his works, too—and herein, perhaps, lies no small part of the secret of his popularity—the warm heart and thoroughly urbane nature of the man are felt instinctively by his readers, and draw them to him as to a friend.

Hence it is that we find he has been a manual with men the most diverse in their natures, culture, and pursuits. Dante ranks him next after Homer. Montaigne, as might be expected, knows him by heart. Fénelon and Bossuet never weary of quoting him. La Fontaine polishes his own exquisite style upon his model; and Voltaire calls him “the best of preachers.” Hooker escapes with him to the fields to seek oblivion of a hard life, made harder by a shrewish spouse. Lord Chesterfield tells us, “When I talked my best I quoted Horace.” To Boileau and to Wordsworth he is equally dear. Con-

dorset dies in his dungeon with Horace open by his side; and in Gibbon's militia days, "on every march," he says, "in every journey, Horace was always in my pocket, and often in my hand." And as it has been, so it is. Sir William Jones always carried a Horace with him, and by his will ordered that it should be buried in his coffin. But in this he was by no means singular. In many a pocket, where this might be least expected, lies a well-thumbed Horace; and in many a devout Christian heart the maxims of the gentle, genial pagan find a place near the higher teachings of a greater master.

Where so much of a writer's charm lies, as with Horace, in exquisite aptness of language, and in a style perfect for fulness of suggestion, combined with brevity and grace, the task of indicating his characteristics in translation demands the most liberal allowance from the reader. "The lyrical poems of Horace," says Dr Johnson, "never can be perfectly translated, so much of the excellence is in the numbers and expression,"—a remark true of all fine poetry, which can never be "dislimbed" and put together again in another language without injury more or less serious. The present writer had no pet theory of translation to illustrate. His sole aim has been to convey to the mind of an English reader the impression, as nearly as may be, which the originals produce upon his own. The difficulties of such a task are endless. "It is impossible," says Shelley, himself one of the most successful of translators, "to represent in another language the melody of the versification; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the reader is surprised to

find a *caput mortuum*." True in the case even of languages which bear an affinity to our own, this is especially true where Greek or Latin poetry is concerned. The tone must be sufficiently modern to make the poems tolerable as English poems, and yet sufficiently classical to be characteristic, and such as the scholar will recognise as true. No competent translator will satisfy himself; still less can he expect to satisfy others. It will always be easy for the critic to demonstrate that Horace is untranslatable; and no one is likely to be so thoroughly convinced of this as he who has persevered to the end in an attempt to translate the works of the Venusian bard. Still, what has been will be. The attempt, often made, will be as often renewed. *Dulce periculum est*. The very difficulty of the task makes it attractive. Lovers of the poet will go on from time to time striving to transfuse the charm of his manner into English measures; and the many noticeable English versions which have been published even within the few years which have elapsed since the present translation of the Odes was first published, show that the production of a Horace, to meet the modern views of what a translation ought to be, is still a prevailing object of ambition amongst English scholars.

The present version of the Odes grew imperceptibly during many years, having been nearly finished before the idea of a complete version occurred to the translator as a thing to be accomplished. The form of verse into which each Ode has been cast, has been generally selected with a view to reflecting, as closely as might be, what seemed to the translator to be its prevailing tone. It has not always been possible, however, to

follow this indication, where, as frequently happens, either the names of persons or places, often most intractable, but always important, must have been sacrificed, or a measure selected into which these could be interwoven. To be as literal and close as the difference between the languages would admit, has been the aim throughout. But there are occasions, as every scholar knows, where to be faithful to the letter is to be most unfaithful to the spirit of an author; and where to be close is to be hopelessly prosaic. Phrases, nay, single words, and names, rich in associations, and full of poetical suggestiveness in one language, are bald, if not absolutely without significance, in another. Besides, even under the most skilful hands, a thought or sentiment must at times be expanded or condensed to meet the necessity of the stanza. The triumph of the translator is, where this is effected without losing any of the significance, or clashing with the pervading sentiment, of the original. In the translations of others who have made it their aim to imitate the classical forms, the present translator does not find that, upon the whole, they escape the danger of either adding to or subtracting from the language of the original which besets the translator who adopts the more familiar forms of English verse. Such translators are, moreover, apt to forget that it is English verse, and for English readers, they are writing. Thus they fall into the vices of a hybrid style, neither Latin nor English, in which, to use old George Chapman's words—

“ They lose  
The fragrance of their natural dialect,  
And shame their authors with a forcèd gloze.”

A great success may here and there be achieved, which at once satisfies the scholar, and charms the English reader. But how much more frequently does it happen that the result is displeasing to both? The subtle aroma of expression is not to be fixed by pseudo-classical turns of phrase, or by artifices of rhythm, which are foreign to the structure and genius of our language. Unless a translation can commend itself to our admiration, as intrinsically interesting and good as a piece of harmonious English verse, it can never be admitted to represent what is in the original a masterpiece of Latin verse.

A point of great difficulty with all translators must be the treatment of the lighter odes—mere *vers de société*, invested by the language for us with a certain stateliness, but which were probably regarded with a very different feeling by the small contemporary circle to which they were addressed. To catch the tone of these, to be light without being flippant, to be playful without being vulgar, demands a delicacy of touch which it is given to few to acquire even in original composition, and which in translation is all but unattainable. Be the translator ever so conscientious, no amount of labour or polish can produce an equivalent which will be accepted as wholly satisfactory.

In translating the Satires and Epistles, the same principle of translation has been followed as in dealing with the Odes, close verbal rendering being less aimed at by the translator than the reflection to the minds of others, as nearly as might be, of the impression produced by the original upon his own. In the treatment of poems which Horace regarded as neither more nor less than rhythmi-

cal prose, it is obvious that a greater freedom of handling is not only permissible, but indispensable, than could be justified in the case of the Odes. In fact, without occasional expansion, and filling in of the links necessary to bring out the author's meaning and intention, it would be impossible to make Horace intelligible to a merely English reader. Even here, however, the translator is bound to apply to himself the rigorous axiom which governed Horace's own practice—

“ Prune the luxuriant, the uncouth refine,  
And show no mercy to an empty line.”

In a few instances where, for obvious reasons, a literal reproduction of the original was not desirable, as in the 25th Ode of the First, and the 10th Ode of the Fourth Books, and in occasional passages elsewhere, both in the Odes and Satires, the translator has not hesitated to make such deviations from the text as are required by the purer morals of the present day. For the same reason the 8th and 12th Epodes, and the greater portion of the 2d Satire of the First Book, have been altogether omitted. A translator of the nineteenth century must feel with tenfold force what Quintilian long ago expressed—*et Horatium nolim in quibusdam interpretari*. It would be to his shame if his book were not such as could raise no blush on the cheek of a good woman.





THE ODES

BOOK I.



# BOOK I.

## ODE I.

TO MÆCENAS.

**M**ÆCENAS, scion of a race  
Of kings, my fortunes' crowning grace  
And constant stay, some men there are,  
Who joy to gather with the car  
Olympic dust; and whom the goal  
By hot wheels cleared, that round it roll,  
And noble palm, can elevate  
To gods, the lords of earth's estate!

One feels his breast with rapture throb,  
If the Quiritians' fickle mob  
Raise him, 'mid brawl and civic roar,  
To honours doubled o'er and o'er;  
Another if he store, and fill  
His private granaries, until  
Their teeming area contains  
The harvests of all Lybia's plains.

Him that delights afield to moil,  
Tilling his old paternal soil,  
You ne'er could tempt, by all the pelf  
Of golden Attalus himself,  
With strong-ribbed Cyprian keel to creep,  
Where Myrtos' island waters sleep.

The merchant, with affright aghast,  
When Africus with furious blast  
Lashes the Icarian waves to foam,  
Extols his quiet inland home ;  
But, safe in port, he straight equips  
Anew his tempest-battered ships,  
By no disasters to be taught  
Contentment with a lowly lot.

And there be other-some are fain  
Full cups of Massic old to drain,  
Nor scorn from the unbroken day  
To snatch an hour, their limbs to lay  
'Neath leafy arbutus, or dream  
Beside some lulling fountain's stream.

The camp makes many a heart beat high,  
The trumpet's call, the clarion's cry,  
And all the grim array of war,  
Which mothers' fearful hearts abhor.

Regardless of his gentle bride,  
The huntsman carries from her side,  
Though winds blow keen 'neath skies austere,  
If his stanch hounds have tracked the deer,  
Or by the meshes rent is seen  
Where late a Marsian boar hath been.

Thee doth the ivy's wreathèd bough,  
Meet guerdon of the scholar's brow,  
Commingle with the gods supreme !  
Me groves retired from noonday's beam,  
And Nymphs that sport with Fauns along,  
Dissever from the vulgar throng ;

If nor Euterpe hush her strain,  
Nor Polyhymnia disdain  
To strike for me her Lesbian lyre,  
And fill me with a poet's fire.  
Give me but these, and rank me 'mong  
The sacred bards of lyric song,  
I'll soar beyond the lists of time,  
And strike the stars with head sublime.\*

\* A kindred aspiration, but more nobly expressed, is that of Wordsworth:—

“ Blessings be on them, and eternal praise,  
Who give us nobler loves, and nobler cares,  
The poets who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight in heavenly lays!  
*Oh, might my name be numbered among theirs,  
Then gladly would I end my mortal days!*”

## ODE II.

TO AUGUSTUS CÆSAR.

ENOUGH of snow, enough of direful hail  
 Hath Jove in anger showered upon the land,  
 And launching havoc with his red right hand  
 On tower and temple, made the city quail,—

Made all the nations quail, lest Pyrrha's age  
 Should come again, with brood of monsters strange,  
 When Proteus drove his ocean-herd to range  
 The mountain-tops in wondrous pilgrimage ;

And fish were tangled in the branching elm,  
 The brooding stock-dove's haunt in days of yore,  
 And roe-deer swam affrighted 'mid the roar  
 Of seas that did their native glades o'erwhelm.

The yellow Tiber, with its waves hurled back  
 From the Etruscan coast, have we beheld,  
 Threaten the monuments of regal eld,  
 And Vesta's fane, with universal wrack.

Rising in ire, to avenge his Ilia's plaint,  
 He bursts his bounds, and, stirred through all his deeps,  
 O'er his left bank the uxorious river sweeps,  
 Though unapproved by Jove, and spurns restraint.

Thinned by their parents' crimes, our youth shall hear  
 How Roman against Roman bared the blade,  
 Which the fierce Persian fitlier low had laid,  
 Shall hear, how kin met kin in conflict drear.

What god shall we, to save the state from doom,  
 Importune ; by what pray'r shall virgins pure  
 Their Vesta's ear so long regardless lure,  
 To listen to their quired hymns? To whom

Will Jove assign the office and the might  
 To expiate our guilt? Oh, to our pray'r,  
 Augur Apollo, here at length repair,  
 Veiling in clouds thy shoulders ivory-white !

Or, laughing Erycina, round whose head  
 Boy Cupid flits and Mirth on airy wing ;\*  
 Or, on thine outcast sons if thou dost fling  
 Some kindly glances, thou, our Founder dread,

Sated, alas ! with war's too lengthened sport !  
 Who joy'st in gleaming helms, and battle's roar,  
 And, foot to foot with foemen dyed in gore,  
 The Marsian's flashing eye, and fateful port !

Or else do thou, sweet Maia's wingèd child,  
 Doffing the God, descend to earth, and wear  
 The form of youth, Cæsar's avenger, there  
 While thou abid'st, submitting to be styled !

Long, long to heav'n be thy return delayed,  
 Long, long may'st thou well pleased beside us stay,  
 And no fell air waft thee from earth away  
 At our dark crimes indignant and dismayed !

Rather lead mighty triumphs here as now,  
 Joy to be called our Prince and Father here,  
 Nor let the Median unchastised career  
 Where Romans sway,—our leader, Cæsar, thou !

\* "And all about her neck and shoulders flew  
 A flock of little Loves and Sports and Joys,  
 With nimble wings of gold and purple hue."

—SPENSER'S *Fairy Queen*, IV. x. 42.

## ODE III.

TO THE SHIP IN WHICH VIRGIL WAS ABOUT TO SAIL  
FOR GREECE.

MAY the great goddess-queen of Cyprus isle,  
And Helen's brothers, those twin cressets fair,  
And he that rules the winds, propitious smile,  
All save Iäpyx chaining in their lair,  
And govern so thy course, O bark, that thou  
Mayest waft in safety to Athenè's shore  
My Virgil, to thy care intrusted now,  
And to its love my soul's dear half restore :

In oak or triple brass his breast was mailed,  
Who first committed to the ruthless deep  
His fragile skiff, nor inly shrank and quailed,  
To hear the headlong Afric fiercely sweep  
With northern blasts to wrestle and to rave,  
Nor feared to face the tristful Hyades,  
And Notus tyrant of the Adrian wave,  
That lifts, or calms at will the restless seas.\*

\* What form of death could daunt his soul, who viewed  
Ocean's dread shapes, nor turned his eyes away,  
Its surging waves, and with disaster strewed  
Thy fated rocks, Acroceraunia ?

\* " First came great Neptune with his three-forked mace,  
That rules the seas, and makes them rise or fall."

—*Fairy Queen*, IV. ii. 2.



Vainly hath Jove in wisdom land from land  
By seas dissevered wild and tempest-tossed,  
If vessels bound, despite his high command,  
O'er waters purposed never to be crossed.

Presumptuous man, in insolence of soul,  
Sweeps to his aim through sacrilege and crime ;  
Heaven's fire for us the bold Prometheus stole  
By fraud unhallowed in the olden time ;  
Then wasting agues, hectic fevers smote  
The earth, and hosts of new-born terrors spread ;  
And Death, till then forgetful and remote,  
Quickened his slow, inevitable tread !

On wings that were forbid to mortals durst  
Vain Dædalus to cleave the void of air ;  
Through fateful Acheron Alcides burst :  
Nought is too arduous for man to dare.  
In our unbounded folly we aspire  
To heaven itself ; and such our guilty pride,  
We will not let great Jove forget his ire,  
Nor lay his vengeful thunderbolts aside.

## ODE IV.

TO SESTIUS.

AS biting Winter flies, lo, Spring with sunny skies,  
 And balmy airs ! and barks long dry put out again  
 from shore ;

Now the ox forsakes his byre, and the husbandman his fire,  
 And daisy-dappled meadows bloom where winter frosts  
 lay hoar.\*

By Cytherea led, while the moon shines overhead,  
 The Nymphs and Graces, hand in hand, with alternating  
 feet

Shake the ground, while swinking Vulcan strikes the sparkles  
 fierce and red

From the forges of the Cyclops, with reiterated beat.

'Tis the time with myrtle green to bind our glistening locks,  
 Or with flowers, wherein the loosened earth herself hath  
 newly dressed,

And to sacrifice to Faunus in some glade amidst the rocks  
 A yearling lamb, or else a kid, if such delight him best.

Death comes alike to all—to the monarch's lordly hall,  
 Or the hovel of the beggar, and his summons none shall stay.

O Sestius, happy Sestius ! use the moments as they pass ;  
 Far-reaching hopes are not for us, the creatures of a day.

\* " Joyous, the impatient husbandman perceives  
 Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers  
 Drives from their stalls, to where the well-used plough  
 Lies in the furrow, loosened from the frost."

—THOMSON'S *Seasons*: "Spring."

Thee soon shall night enshroud; and the Manes' phantom  
crowd,

And the starveling house unbeautiful of Pluto shut thee in;  
And thou shalt not banish care by the ruddy wine-cup there,  
Nor woo the gentle Lycidas, whom all are mad to win.



## ODE V.

TO PYRRHA.

PYRRHA, what slender boy, in perfume steeped,  
Doth in the shade of some delightful grot  
Caress thee now on couch with roses heaped?  
For whom dost thou thine amber tresses knot

With all thy seeming-artless grace? Ah me,  
How oft will he thy perfidy bewail,  
And joys all flown, and shudder at the sea  
Rough with the chafing of the blust'rous gale,

Who now, fond dreamer, revels in thy charms;  
Who all unweeting how the breezes veer,  
Hopes still to find a welcome in thine arms  
As warm as now, and thee as loving-dear!

Ah, woe for those, on whom thy spell is flung  
My votive tablet, in the temple set,  
Proclaims that I to ocean's god have hung  
The vestments in my shipwreck smirched and wet.\*

\* "Then when I shall myself in safety see,  
A table, for eternal monument  
Of thy great grace, and my great jeopardy,  
Great Neptune, I avow to hallow unto thee."

—*Fairy Queen*, III. iv. 10.

## ODE VI.

TO AGRIPPA.

**B**Y Varius shall thy prowess be  
 In strains Mæonic chanted,  
 The victories by land and sea,  
 Our gallant troops, led on by thee,  
 Have won with swords undaunted.

Such themes, Agrippa, never hath  
 My lyre essayed, nor bold  
 Pelides' unrelenting wrath,  
 Nor artfullest Ulysses' path  
 O'er oceans manifold ;

Nor woes of Pelops' fated line ;  
 Such flights too soaring are !  
 Nor doth my bashful Muse incline,  
 Great Cæsar's eulogies and thine  
 With its thin notes to mar.\*

Who, who shall sing, with accents just,  
 Mars' adamantine mail,  
 Or Merion, grimed with Trojan dust,  
 Or him who, strong in Pallas' trust,  
 Made even Immortals quail ?

\* "O sovereign queen, whose praise I would indite,  
 Indite I would as duty doth excite ;  
 But ah ! my rhymes too rude and rugged are,  
 When in so high an object they do light,  
 And, striving fit to make, I fear do mar."

—*Fairy Queen*, III. ii. 3.

Heart-whole, or pierced by Cupid's sting,  
 We in our airy way  
 Of banquets and of maidens sing,  
 With pared nails coyly skirmishing,  
 To keep young men at bay.



## ODE VII.

TO MUNATIUS PLANCUS.

SOME will laud fair Mytilene,—  
 Rhodes, where many wonders be,—  
 Some great Ephesus, or Corinth  
 Watered by its double sea ;  
 Thebes renowned for Bacchus, Delphi  
 Famous for Apollo's shrine,  
 Others praise Thessalian Tempe,  
 And its thousand charms divine ;  
 Some the towers of spotless Pallas  
 Chant, nor ask another theme,  
 Thence to pluck an olive garland  
 All their pride and all their dream.  
 Many a bard, in Juno's honour,  
 Makes the burden of his lyre  
 Rich Mycenæ, grassy Argos,  
 Famous for its steeds of fire.

Me nor patient Lacedemon,  
 Nor Larissa's fertile plain,  
 Like Albunea's echoing fountain  
 All my inmost heart hath ta'en.

Give me Anio's headlong torrent,  
And Tiburnus' grove and hills,  
And its orchards sparkling dewy  
With a thousand wimpling rills !

As the sunny south wind often  
Sweeps the louring clouds away,  
Nor with showers unceasing ever  
Loads the long and dreary day,  
Plancus, so do thou remember  
Still to cheer with balmy wine  
All the care and grief and travail  
Of this toilworn life of thine ;  
Whether in the thronged camp, gleaming  
With a thousand spears, or laid  
On the turf beneath the umbrage  
Of thy loved Tiburtine glade.

Teucer, though an outcast hunted  
From his native Salamis,  
Hunted by a father's anger,  
Natheless—as the legend is—  
On his forehead wet with revel  
First a wreath of poplar bound,  
Then his comrades thus accosted,  
As they sadly stood around :  
“ Wheresoever Fortune, kinder  
Than my sire, our voyage bends,  
Thither shall we go together,  
O my comrades, brothers, friends !  
Teucer for your leader,—marshalled  
Under Teucer's guiding star,  
What shall stay, or what shall daunt us ?  
Hence, then, craven fears, afar !

For I hold Apollo's promise,  
 That in other climes a new  
 Salamis shall rise around us,  
 Fairer, nobler to the view !  
 Now, ye brave hearts, that have weathered  
 Many a sorer strait with me,  
 Chase your cares with wine,—to-morrow  
 We shall plough the mighty sea !”



## ODE VIII.

TO LYDIA.

**W**HY, Lydia, why,  
 I pray, by all the gods above,  
 Art so resolved that Sybaris should die,  
 And all for love ?

Why doth he shun  
 The Campus Martius' sultry glare ?  
 He that once recked of neither dust nor sun,  
 Why rides he there,

First of the brave,  
 Taming the Gallic steed no more ?  
 Why doth he shrink from Tiber's yellow wave ?  
 Why thus abhor

The wrestler's oil,  
 As 'twere from viper's tongue distilled ?  
 Why do his arms no livid bruises soil,  
 He, once so skilled,

The disc or dart  
 Far, far beyond the mark to hurl?  
 And tell me, tell me, in what nook apart,  
 Like baby-girl,

Lurks the poor boy,  
 Veiling his manhood, as did Thetis' son,  
 To 'scape war's bloody clang, while fated Troy  
 Was yet undone?



ODE IX.

TO THALIARCHUS.

SEE, Thaliarch, see, across the plain  
 Soracte white with snow !  
 Scarce may the labouring woods sustain  
 Their load, and locked in icy chain  
 The streams have ceased to flow.

Logs on the fire, your biggest, fling,  
 To thaw the pinching cold,  
 And from the time to take its sting  
 A pipkin forth of Sabine bring  
 Four mellowing summers old.

All else unto the Gods leave we ;  
 When they have stilled the roar  
 Of winds that with the yeasty sea  
 Conflict and brawl, the cypress-tree,  
 The old ash shake no more.



What with to-morrow comes forbear  
 To ask,\* and count as gain  
 Each day fate grants, ere time and care  
 Have chilled thy blood, and thinned thy hair  
 Love's sweets do not disdain ;

Nor, boy, disdain the dance ! For, mark,  
 Now is thy time to take  
 Joy in the play, the crowded park,  
 And those low whispers in the dark,  
 Which trysting lovers make ;

In the sweet laugh, that marks the spot  
 Where hid the fair one lies,†  
 The token from the wrist besought,  
 Or from the finger wrung, that not  
 Too cruelly denies.‡

\* "What need a man forestall his date of grief,  
 And run to meet what he should most avoid?"  
 —MILTON'S *Comus*, 362.

† "She feigns a laugh to see me search around,  
 And by that laugh the willing nymph is found."  
 —POPE.

‡ "Well-pleased I hear the whispered 'No !'  
 The whispered 'No !'—how little meant ;  
 Sweet falsehood, that endears consent."  
 —COLERIDGE.

## ODE X.

TO MERCURY.

MERCURIUS, Atlas' grandchild eloquent,  
 Who didst to gentle ways man's primal race  
 By language mould, and their uncouth limbs lent  
     The gymnast's grace,

Herald of mighty Jove, and all the gods,  
 Lord of the curvèd lyre, who canst at will  
 Filch for thy sport, whate'er may be the odds,  
     I'll hymn thee still !

When with loud threats he charged thee to forego  
 The kine, thy impish craft from him had wiled,  
 Even while he spoke, of quiver reft and bow,  
     Apollo smiled.

Quitting his halls, by thee rich Priam led  
 Stole past the watch-fires round Troy's leaguered wall,  
 And through the Grecian camp in safety sped,  
     Unseen of all.

Thou guid'st to bliss the spirits of the just,  
 Driving the phantoms with thy golden rod,  
 In heaven and hell beloved and held in trust  
     By every god !

## ODE XI.

TO LEUCONÖE.

**A**SK not—such lore's forbidden—  
 What destined term may be  
 Within the future hidden,  
 For us, Leuconöe.  
 Both thou and I  
 Must quickly die !  
 Content thee, then, nor madly hope  
 To wrest a false assurance from Chaldean horoscope.\*

Far nobler, better were it,  
 Whate'er may be in store,  
 With soul serene to bear it ;  
 If winters many more  
 Jove spare for thee,  
 Or this shall be  
 The last, that now with sullen roar  
 Scatters the Tuscan surge in foam upon the rock-bound shore.

\* "When all looks fair about, and thou seest not a cloud so big as a hand to threaten thee, forget not the wheel of things ; think of sullen vicissitudes, but beat not thy brains to foreknow them. Be armed against such obscurities rather by submission than foreknowledge. The knowledge of future evils mortifies present felicities, and there is more content in the uncertainty or ignorance of them. This favour our Saviour vouchsafed unto Peter when He foretold not His death in plain terms, and so by an ambiguous and cloudy delivery damped not the spirit of His disciples. But in the assured foreknowledge of the deluge Noah lived many years under the affliction of a flood ; and Jerusalem was taken unto Jeremy before it was besieged."—SIR T. BROWNE'S *Christian Morals*, part iii. § 16.

Be wise, your spirit firing  
 With cups of tempered wine,  
 And hopes afar aspiring  
 In compass brief confine.  
 Use all life's powers ;  
 The envious hours  
 Fly as we talk ; \* then live to-day,  
 Nor fondly to to-morrow trust more than you must or may.

\* " For though we slepe or wake, or rome or ride,  
 Ay fleeth the time, it will no man abide."

—CHAUCER, *The Clerk's Tale.*

" Let's take the instant by the forward top !  
 . . . . . On our quick'st decrees  
 The inaudible and noiseless foot of time  
 Steals ere we can effect them."

—*All's Well that Ends Well*, Act v. Sc. 3.

## ODE XII.

TO AUGUSTUS.

WHAT man, what hero, Clio, wilt thou sing,  
 With lyre or fluting shrill?  
 What god, whose name shall sportive echo ring  
 On Helicon's umbrageous hill,  
 Or Pindus' steepy crest, or Hæmus ever chill?

Whose groves reeled after Orpheus, and his song,  
 Who by its spell could stay  
 The rushing sweep of streams and tempests strong,  
 And by his tuneful harpings sway  
 The listening oaks to move where'er he led the way.

What shall I sing before his praise, who reigns  
 The world's great sire, and guides  
 Of men and gods the pleasures and the pains,  
 Who rules the land and ocean's tides,  
 And change of seasons meet for the vast earth provides?

From whom springs none that mightier is than he,  
 Nor other can we trace,  
 Of equal might, or second in degree ;  
 Yet Pallas fills the honoured place  
 Next to her sire, upraised o'er all the Olympian race.

Nor Bacchus, bold in battle, shall thy fame  
 My numbers fail to show,  
 And, virgin huntress of the woods, thy name  
 In answering strains shall flow,  
 And thine, Apollo, thine, god of the unerring bow!

Alcides, too, and Leda's sons I'll sound,  
 Illustrious twins, that are  
 For wrestling this, that for the race renowned,  
 Soon as whose kindly star  
 Upon the shipman gleams, amid the tempest's war

Down from the rocks the weltering surges fall,  
 The winds in zephyrs creep,  
 Back from the sky is rolled its cloudy pall,  
 And far along the deep  
 The threat'ning waves—for so they will—are lulled to sleep.

What next shall fill the burden of my strain,  
 I wist not to decide ;  
 Or Romulus, or Numa's tranquil reign,  
 Or Tarquin in his pride,  
 Or him of Utica, the brave, that nobly died.

Next Regulus, and the Scauri, Paulus too,  
 That flung his soul away,  
 His mighty soul, when Punic foes o'erthrew  
 Our strength that fatal day,  
 With grateful pride I'll chant in my undying lay ;

Fabricius too, and Curius of the locks  
 Unkempt,—Camillus,—all  
 Nurtured to warfare by the daily shocks  
 Of penury, in the small  
 Paternal farm and cot that made of wealth their all.\*

\* "Plenty and peace breeds cowards ; hardness ever  
 Of hardness is mother."

With growth occult expands, like lusty tree,  
 The young Marcellus' fame : \*  
 The Julian star's serene resplendency  
 All other stars doth shame,  
 As quells the lesser fires the Moon's triumphant flame.

Thou sire and guardian of all human kind,  
 Saturnian Jove, to thee  
 The care of mighty Cæsar was assigned  
 By destiny, and he  
 Next to thyself in power our sovereign lord shall be.

Whether he quell the Parthian threatening spoil  
 To Latium' sons, and lead  
 The foe, that would insult our natal soil,  
 In triumph,—or the Mede  
 Subdue, and other foes, the distant Ind doth breed

Next under thee, his righteous hand shall make  
 The world his rule obey ;  
 Olympus thou with thy dread car shalt shake,  
 Thou shalt thy bolts array  
 Against the groves, wherein foul orgies shrink from day.

\* So the Bishop of Ely, speaking of the development in King Henry V. of the powers and virtues, which had never been surmised in Prince Hal, says :—

“ The prince obscured his contemplation  
 Under the veil of wildness ; which, no doubt,  
 Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,  
 Unseen, yet *crecive in its faculty.*”

—*Henry V.*, Act I. Sc. I.

## ODE XIII.

TO LYDIA.

LYDIA, when so oft the charms  
 Of Telephus you bid me note,  
 Taunt me with his snowy arms,  
     Rosy cheek, and shapely throat,  
 Within my breast I feel the fires  
 Of wild and desperate desires.

Then reels my brain, then on my cheek  
     The shifting colour comes and goes,  
 And tears, that flow unbidden, speak  
     The torture of my inward throes,  
 The fierce unrest, the deathless flame,  
 That slowly macerates my frame.

Oh agony ! to trace where he  
     Has smutched thy shoulders ivory-white  
 Amid his tipsy revelry ;  
     Or where, in trance of fierce delight,  
 Upon thy lips the frenzied boy  
 Has left the records of his joy.\*

\* The allusions to this tiger-like ferocity of tenderness are frequent in both ancient and modern poets. Thus Plautus speaks of *Teneris labellis molles morsiunculae*—the dainty nibbles of fond lips. Again, Tibullus, recounting the many proofs of his affection which he had given to the inconstant Delia, takes credit for having taught her how to obliterate the traces of wounds inflicted in such amorous encounters :—

“ *Tum succos herbasque dedi, queis livor abiret,  
 Quem facit impresso mutua dente Venus.*”

—ELEG. I. vi. l. 15.



Hope not such love can last for aye  
 (But thou art deaf to words of mine !)  
 Such selfish love, as ruthlessly  
 Could wound those kisses all divine,  
 Which Venus steeps in sweets intense  
 Of her own nectar's quintessence.

Oh, trebly blest, and blest for ever,  
 Are they, whom true affection binds,  
 No cold distrusts nor janglings sever  
 The union of their constant minds,  
 But life in blended current flows,  
 Serene and sunny to the close !

“ Then herbs and balms I gave thee, to dispel  
 Those livid marks, that do the skin distain,  
 When lovers bite, where kisses thickly fell,  
 Stamping their poignant ecstasy in pain.”

So, too, Shakespeare with peculiar fitness puts into Cleopatra's mouth allusions to her experiences in this direction, in the first heyday of her passion for Antony, and again when signalling her constancy to him by her death :—

“ Think on me,  
 That am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black.”  
 —*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I. Sc. 5.

“ The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,  
 That hurts and is desired.”

- *Ibid.*, Act V. Sc. 2.

## ODE XIV.

TO THE REPUBLIC.

**O** BARK, fresh waves shall hurry thee,  
 Yet once again, far out to sea ;  
 Beware, beware ; and boldly seize  
 The port, where thou mayest ride at ease !  
 Dost thou not see, thy side is shorn  
 Of all its oars, thy mainmast torn,  
 And hear thy lanyards moan and shriek,  
 And all thy straining timbers creak,  
 Too frail to meet the surge around,  
 Though plank to plank with cables bound ?  
 Thy sails are rent ; nor gods hast thou  
 When danger threatens, to hear thy vow ;  
 Although thou art a Pontic pine,  
 A woodland child of noble line,  
 Vain, vain amid the tempest's rage  
 Such vaunted name and lineage !  
 No trust hath fearful marinere  
 In gilded prow ; so thou beware !  
 Unless it be thy doom to form  
 The sport and pastime of the storm.  
 O thou, that erewhile wert to me  
 A heavy-sad anxiety,  
 And now my dream, my passion art,  
 The care that chiefly fills my heart,  
 Oh, be advised, and shun the seas,  
 That wash the shining Cyclades !

## ODE XV.

## THE PROPHECY OF NEREUS.

AS the treacherous shepherd bore over the deep  
 His hostess, fair Helena, Nereus arose,  
 Hushed the war of the winds for a season to sleep,  
 And thus sang the doom of retributive woes :

“Thou bearest her home with an omen of dread,  
 Whom Greece shall reclaim, with her myriads vowed  
 To tear by the sword thy false mate from thy bed,  
 And crush Priam’s empire, the ancient, the proud.

“Horse and man, how they labour ! What deaths shall  
 overwhelm,  
 And all for thy crime, the Dardanians in night !  
 See Pallas preparing her ægis and helm,  
 Her chariot, and all the fierce frenzy of fight !

“Go, trim as thou wilt, boy, thy loose-flowing curls,  
 Go, vaunt thee, that Venus will shield thee from wrong,  
 And, laid with thy lute ’midst a bevy of girls,  
 Troll measures effeminate all the day long.

“Ay, hide an’ thou mayst in the couch of thy lust  
 From the death-dealing spear, and the arrows of Crete,  
 From the roar of the battle, its carnage, its dust,  
 And Ajax pursuing, remorseless and fleet !

“ Yet in gore thy adulterous locks shall be rolled,  
Full surely, though late. Lo, the scourge of thy race,  
Laertiades! Dost thou not see him? Behold!  
And Pylian Nestor!—And see, on thy trace

“ Rushes Teucer of Salamis, dauntless and fell,  
And Sthenelus, skilful in combat, nor less  
In ruling the war-steed expert to excel,  
And close on thy track, too, shall Merion press!

“ Lo, Tydides, surpassing his father in might,  
Athirst for thy life-blood, with furious cheer  
Is hunting thee out through the thick of the fight,  
While before him thou fly'st, like a timorous deer,

“ Who, espying a wolf on the brow of the hill,  
Flies far from the pasture, with heart-heaving pants!  
Is it thus that thy leman shall see thee fulfil  
The promise of all thy presumptuous vaunts?

“ The wrath of Achilles shall stay for a while  
The downfall of Ilion, and Phrygia's dames,—  
Yet a few winters more, and her funeral pile  
In ashes shall fall 'midst Achaian flames!”

## ODE XVI.

TO TYNDARIS.

O THOU, than thy beautiful mother that still  
 More beautiful art, for all men to admire,  
 My scurrilous verses destroy how you will,  
 Deep drown them in ocean, or quench them in fire !

Dindymené herself, nor the Pythian, when  
 He convulses his priests with the fury prophetic,  
 Nor Bacchus, nor Corybants, clashing again  
 And again their wild cymbals, such fervour phrenetic

Can move as fell rage ; which no terrors can tame,  
 Neither Norican glaive, nor the ocean bestrewed  
 With wreck and disaster, nor merciless flame,  
 Nor the thunders of Jove in his vengefullest mood.

'Tis the curse of our birth ; for Prometheus, they say,  
 Compelled from all beasts some particular part  
 To select for his work, to our primitive clay  
 Imparted the lion's impetuous heart.

Rage drew on Thyestes the vengeance of heaven,  
 Through rage have been levelled the loftiest halls  
 And cities high-famous, and ploughshares been driven  
 By insolent enemies over their walls.

But rest thee at ease ! In youth's pleasant spring-time  
 The shafts of my passion at random I flung,  
 And dashing headlong into petulant rhyme  
 I recked neither where nor how fiercely I stung.

But a kindlier mood hath my passion supplanted,  
 And music more gentle shall flow from my lute,  
 Wouldst thou make me thy friend,—my vile libels recanted,—  
 And smile with reciprocal love on my suit !



## ODE XVII.

TO TYNDARIS.

MY own sweet Lucretilis ofttime can lure  
 From his native Lycæus kind Faunus the fleet,  
 To watch o'er my flocks, and to keep them secure  
 From summer's fierce winds, and its rains, and its heat.

Then the mates of a lord of too pungent a fragrance  
 Securely through brake and o'er precipice climb,  
 And crop, as they wander in happiest vagrance,  
 The arbutus green, and the sweet-scented thyme.

Nor murderous wolf, nor green snake may assail  
 My innocent kidlings, dear Tyndaris, when  
 His pipings resound through Ustica's low vale,  
 Till each mossed rock in music makes answer again.

The muse is still dear to the gods, and they shield  
 Me their dutiful bard ; with a bounty divine  
 They have blessed me with all that the country can yield,  
 Then come, and whatever I have shall be thine !

Here screened from the dog-star, in valley retired,  
 Shalt thou sing that old song thou canst warble so well,  
 Which tells how one passion Penelope fired,  
 And charmed fickle Circe herself by its spell.

Here cups shalt thou sip, 'neath the broad-spreading shade,  
 Of the innocent vintage of Lesbos at ease,  
 No fumes of hot ire shall our banquet invade,  
 Or mar that sweet festival under the trees.

And fear not, lest Cyrus, that jealous young bear,  
 On thy poor little self his rude fingers should set,  
 Should pluck from thy bright locks the chaplet, and tear  
 Thy dress, that ne'er harmed him nor any one yet.



## ODE XVIII.

TO VARUS.

**L**ET the vine, dearest Varus, the vine be the first  
 Of all trees to be planted, of all to be nursed,  
 On thy well-sheltered acres, round Catilus' walls,  
 Where the sun on the green slopes of Tivoli falls !  
 For to him who ne'er moistens his lip with the grape  
 Life's every demand wears a terrible shape,  
 And wine, and wine only, has magic to scare  
 Despondency's gloom or the torments of care.  
 Who's he that, with wine's joyous fumes in his brain,  
 Of the travails of war, or of want will complain  
 Nor rather, sire Bacchus, thy eulogies chant,  
 Or thine, Venus, thine, ever beautiful, vaunt ?

Yet, that none may be tempted to slight the control  
 That limits the boon to a temperate bowl,  
 A warning is set in the wine-kindled strife,  
 Where the Centaurs and Lapithæ grappled for life ;

In the madmen of Thrace, too, a warning is set,  
Who, lost in their Bacchanal frenzy, forget  
The bounds that dissever the right from the wrong,  
And sweep on the tide of their passions along.

Bright god of the vine, I never will share  
In orgies so vile and unholy, nor tear  
The clusters of various foliage away,  
That keep thy blest mysteries veiled from the day.  
Then clash not the cymbals, and wind not the horn,  
Dread sounds, of whose maddening accents are born  
Blind Self-love, and Vanity lifting on high  
Its feather-brained head, as 'twould strike at the sky,  
And Frankness, transparent as crystal, that shows  
In its babbling incontinence all that it knows.



## ODE XIX.

TO GLYCERA.

THE ruthless mother of wild desires,  
 And Theban Semele's fervent son,  
 And wanton idlesse have kindled fires  
     Within me, I dreamed I had long outrun.  
 I am maddened by Glycera's beauty's blaze,—  
     The marble of Paros is dull beside it—  
 By her pretty, provoking, and petulant ways,  
     And face too dazzling for eye to 'bide it.

Into me rushing, hath Venus quite  
     Forsaken her Cyprus, nor lets me chant  
 The Scyths and the Parthians, dauntless in flight,  
     Nor aught that to Love is irrelevant.  
 Hither, boys, turf of the freshest bring,  
     Vervain, and incense, and wine unstinted !  
 The goddess less fiercely my heart shall sting,  
     When the victim's gore hath her altar tinted.

## ODE XX.

TO MÆCENAS.

OUR common Sabine wine shall be  
     The only drink I'll give to thee,  
     In modest goblets too ;  
 'Twas stored in crock of Grecian delf,  
 Dear knight Mæcenas, by myself,  
     That very day, when through  
 The theatre thy plaudits rang,  
 And sportive echo caught the clang,  
     And answered from the banks  
 Of thine own dear paternal stream,  
 Whilst Vatican renewed the theme  
     Of homage and of thanks !  
 Old Cæcuban, the very best,  
 And juice in vats Calenian pressed  
     You drink at home, I know :  
 My cups no choice Falernian fills,  
 Nor unto them do Formia's hills  
     Impart a tempered glow.

## ODE XXI.

IN HONOUR OF DIANA AND APOLLO.

YE tender virgins fair,  
 To great Diana sing,  
 Ye boys, to Cynthius of the unshorn hair,  
 Your dulcet anthems bring,  
 And let Latona mingle with your theme,  
 That dearer is than all to Jove, Heaven's lord supreme !

Her praises sing, ye maids,  
 Who doth in streams delight,  
 In whispering groves, and intertangled glades,  
 On Algidus' cool height,  
 Or Erymanthus with its dusky pines,  
 Or where with verdure bright the leafy Cragus shines.

Ye boys, in numbers meet,  
 Fair Tempe's praises chant,  
 Delos, that was Apollo's natal seat,  
 And loved peculiar haunt ;  
 Sing, too, his quiver with its golden gleams,  
 And lyre, his brother's gift, that from his shoulder beams !

Moved by your prayers he will  
 Banish distressful war,  
 Famine, and pestilence, and their trains of ill  
 From our loved Rome afar,  
 And from great Cæsar, scattering their blight,  
 The Persian's pride to quell, or Britain's chainless might.

## ODE XXII.

TO ARISTIUS FUSCUS.

FUSCUS, the man of life upright and pure  
 Needeth nor javelin, nor bow of Moor,  
 Nor arrows tipped with venom deadly-sure,  
 Loading his quiver ;

Whether o'er Afric's burning sands he rides,  
 Or frosty Caucasus' bleak mountain-sides,  
 Or wanders lonely, where Hydaspes glides,  
 That storied river.\*

For as I strayed along the Sabine wood,  
 Singing my Lalage in careless mood,  
 Lo, all at once a wolf before me stood,  
 Then turned and fled :

Creature so huge did warlike Daunia ne'er  
 Engender in her forests' wildest lair,  
 Not Juba's land, parched nurse of lions, e'er  
 Such monster bred.

Place me, where no life-laden summer breeze  
 Freshens the meads, or murmurs 'mongst the trees,  
 Where clouds oppress, and withering tempests freeze  
 From shore to shore.

\* "She that has that is clad in complete steel,  
 And like a quivered Nymph, with arrows keen,  
 May trace huge forests and unharboured heaths,  
 Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds."

Place me beneath the sunbeams' fiercest glare,  
 On arid sands, no dwelling anywhere,  
 Still Lalage's sweet smile, sweet voice even there  
 I will adore.\*

\* Cowper has imitated this verse :—

“ Place me where Winter breathes his keenest air,  
 And I will sing, if Liberty be there ;  
 And I will sing at Liberty's dear feet,  
 In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.”

—*Table Talk.*

“ By night, by day, a-field, at hame,  
 The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame,  
 And aye I muse and sing thy name,  
 I only live to love thee.

“ Though I were doomed to wander on,  
 Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,  
 Till my last weary sand was run,  
 Till then, and then I love thee.”

—BURNS.

## ODE XXIII.

TO CHLOE.

NAY, hear me, dearest Chloe, pray!  
 You shun me like a timid fawn,  
 That seeks its mother all the day  
 By forest brake and upland lawn,  
 Of every passing breeze afraid,  
 And leaf that twitters in the glade.

Let but the wind with sudden rush  
 The whispers of the wood awake,  
 Or lizard green disturb the hush,  
 Quick-darting through the grassy brake,  
 The foolish frightened thing will start,  
 With trembling knees and beating heart.\*

\* The same idea has been beautifully worked out by Spenser, in whom, and in Milton, the influence of Horace's poetry is perhaps more frequently traceable than in any of our poets :—

“ Like as an hynde forth singled from the herde,  
 That hath escaped from a ravenous beast,  
 Yet flies away, of her own feet afearde ;  
 And every leaf, that shaketh with the least  
 Murmure of winde, her terror hath encreast ;  
 So fled fayre Florimel from her vaine feare,  
 Long after she from perill was releast ;  
 Each shade she saw, and each noyse she did heare,  
 Did seeme to be the same, which she escaypt whileare.”

—*Fairy Queen*, III. vii. 1.

But I am neither lion fell,  
 Nor tiger grim to work you woe ;  
 I love you, sweet one, much too well,  
 Then cling not to your mother so,  
 But to a lover's tender arms  
 Confide your ripe and rosy charms.



## ODE XXIV.

TO VIRGIL.

**W**HY should we stem the tears that needs must flow,  
 Why blush, that they should freely flow and long,  
 To think of that dear head in death laid low ?  
 Do thou inspire my melancholy song,  
 Melpomene, in whom the Muses' sire  
 Joined with a liquid voice the mastery of the lyre !

And hath the sleep that knows no waking morn  
 Closed o'er Quinctilius, our Quinctilius dear ?  
 Where shall be found the man of woman born  
 That in desert might be esteemed his peer,—  
 Sincere as he, and resolutely just,  
 So high of heart, and all so absolute of trust ?

He sinks into his rest, bewept of many,  
 And but the good and noble weep for him,  
 But dearer cause thou, Virgil, hast than any,  
 With friendship's tears thy friendless eyes to dim !  
 Alas, alas ! Not to such woeful end  
 Didst thou unto the gods thy prayers unceasing send !

What though thou modulate the tuneful shell  
 With defter skill than Orpheus of old Thrace,  
 When deftliest he played, and with its spell  
 Moved all the listening forest from its place?  
 Yet never, never can thy art avail  
 To bring life's glowing tide back to the phantom pale,

Whom with his black inexorable wand  
 Hermes, austere and pitiless as fate,  
 Hath forced to join the dark and spectral band  
 In their sad journey to the Stygian gate.  
 'Tis hard, great heavens, how hard! But to endure  
 Alleviates the pang we may nor crush nor cure!\*

\* Plautus had expressed this venerable truism in nearly the same language:—

*"Optimum est pati, quod emendare non possis."*

—*Capt. 2. I. 1.*

"'Tis best to bear with what you cannot mend."

Virgil with his usual skill lifted the idea above the level of commonplace, thus:—

*"Superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est."*

—*Æn. v. 710.*

Which Campbell has translated to perfection in the line—

"To bear is to conquer our fate."



## ODE XXV.

TO LYDIA.

**S**WAINS in numbers  
 Break your slumbers,  
 Saucy Lydia, now but seldom,  
 Ay, though at your casement nightly,  
 Tapping loudly, tapping lightly,  
 By the dozen once ye held them.

- Ever turning,  
 Night and morning,  
 Swung your door upon its hinges;  
 Now, from dawn till evening's closing,  
 Lone and desolate reposing,  
 Not a soul its rest infringes.

Serenaders,  
 Sweet invaders,  
 Scanter grow, and daily scanter,  
 Singing, "Lydia, art thou sleeping?  
 Lonely watch thy love is keeping!  
 Wake, oh wake, thou dear enchanter!"

Lorn and faded,  
 You, as they did,  
 Woo, and in your turn are slighted;  
 Worn and torn by passion's fret,  
 You, the pitiless coquette,  
 Waste by fires yourself have lighted,

Late relenting,  
 Left lamenting—  
 “Withered leaves strew wintry brooks!  
 Ivy garlands greenly darkling,  
 Myrtles brown with dewdrops sparkling,  
 Best beseem youth’s glowing looks!”



## ODE XXVI.

TO HIS MUSE.

**B**ELOVED by and loving the Muses,  
 I fling all my sorrow and care  
 To the wind, that wherever it chooses  
 The troublesome freight it may bear.  
 I care not—not I—not a stiver,  
 Who in Scythia frozen and drear  
 ’Neath the scourge of a tyrant may shiver,  
 Or who keeps Tiridates in fear.

O thou in pure springs who delightest,  
 Twine flowers of the sunniest glow,  
 Twine, gentle Pimplea, the brightest  
 Of wreaths for my Lamia’s brow.  
 Without thee unskilled are my numbers;  
 Then thou and thy sisterly choir  
 For him wake the music that slumbers  
 Unknown in the Lesbian lyre?

## ODE XXVII.

## THE CAROUSAL.

**H**OLD! hold! 'Tis for Thracian madmen to fight  
 With wine-cups, that only were made for delight.  
 'Tis barbarous—brutal! I beg of you all,  
 Disgrace not our banquet with bloodshed and brawl!

Sure Median scimitars strangely accord  
 With lamps and with wine at the festival board!  
 'Tis out of all rule! Friends, your places resume,  
 And let us have order once more in the room!

If I am to join you in pledging a beaker  
 Of this stout Falernian, choicest of liquor,  
 Megilla's fair brother must say, from what eyes  
 Flew the shaft, sweetly fatal, that causes his sighs.

How—dumb! Then I drink not a drop. Never blush,  
 Whoever the fair one may be, man! Tush, tush!  
 She'll do your taste credit, I'm certain—for yours  
 Was always select in its little amours.

Don't be frightened! We're all upon honour, you know,  
 So out with your tale! Gracious powers! Is it so?  
 Poor fellow! Your lot has gone sadly amiss,  
 When you fell into such a Charybdis as this!

What witch, what magician, with drinks and with charms,  
 What god can effect your release from her harms?  
 So fettered, scarce Pegasus' self, were he near you,  
 From the fangs of this triple Chimæra might clear you!

## ODE XXVIII.

ARCHYTAS.

SAILOR.

THEE, O Archytas, who hast scanned  
 The wonders of the world by sea and land,  
 The lack of some few grains  
 Of scattered dust detains  
 A shivering phantom here upon Matinum's strand.  
 And it avails thee nothing, that thy soul,  
 Death's sure-devoted prey,  
 Soared to the regions of eternal day,  
 Where wheeling spheres in silvery brightness roll.

ARCHYTAS.

What then! E'en Pelops' sire, the guest  
 Of gods, to Orcus sank, by death oppressed,  
 And old Tithonus, too,  
 Though heavenly air he drew,  
 And Minos stern, who shared the secrets of Jove's breast.  
 There, too, Panthoides, once more immured,  
 Roams, though his spirit's pride  
 All save this fading flesh to death denied,  
 By his old Trojan shield deceitfully assured

And he, even thou wilt grant me, was  
 Not meanly versed in truth and nature's laws.  
 But for us all doth stay  
 One night, and death's dark way  
 Must needs be trodden once, howe'er we pause.

The Furies some to Mars' grim sport consign,  
The hungry waves devour  
The seaman, young and old drop hour by hour,  
No single head is spared by ruthless Proserpine.

Me, too, the headlong gust,  
That dogs Orion, 'neath the billows thrust.  
But, prithee, seamen, shed  
On my unburied head  
And limbs with gentle hand some grains of drifting dust !  
So may the storm that threatens the western deep  
Turn all its wrath away,  
To smite the forests of Venusia,  
And thou thy course secure o'er the mild ocean keep !

So may from every hand  
Wealth rain on thee by righteous Jove's command !  
And Neptune, who doth bear  
Tarentum in his care  
Bring thy rich-laden argosy to land !  
Deny me this, the common tribute due,  
And races to be born  
Of thy sons' sons in after-years forlorn,  
Though guiltless of thy crime, thy heartless scorn shall rue !

Nor shall thyself go free,  
For Fate's vicissitudes shall follow thee,  
Its laws, that slight for slight,  
And good for good requite !  
Not unavenged my bootless pray'r shall be,  
Nor victim ever expiate thy guilt.  
Oh, then, though speed thou must—  
It asks brief tarrying—thrice with kindly dust  
Bestrew my corpse, and then press onward as thou wilt !

## ODE XXIX.

TO ICCIUS.

SO, Iccius, thou hast hankerings  
 For swart Arabia's golden treasures,  
 And for her still unconquered kings  
 Art marshalling war's deadly measures,  
 And forging fetters meant to tame  
 The Mede, our curse and shame?

Say, what barbarian virgin fair  
 Shall wait on thee, that slew her lover,  
 What princely boy, with perfumed hair,  
 Thy cupbearer, shall round thee hover,  
 Schooled by his sire, with fatal craft  
 To wing the Seric shaft?

Up mountains steep may glide the brooks,  
 And Tiber to its sources roam,  
 When thou canst change thy noble books  
 Culled far and near, and learnèd home,  
 For armour dipped in Ebro's wave,  
 Who once such promise gave!

## ODE XXX.

TO VENUS.

O VENUS, Cnidian queen, and Paphian, tear  
 Thyself from thy dear Cyprus\* for a while,  
 And to that mansion beautiful repair,  
 Where Glycera with incense without spare  
 Invokes thy smile.

Come! and with thee let Cupid loving-warm,  
 The Graces too, with girdles all unbraced,  
 And linked with them the Nymphs in jocund swarm,  
 And Youth that, wanting thee, hath little charm,  
 And Mercury haste!

\* It was to Cyprus that Venus proceeded, when she sprang from the foam of the sea near Cythera. The birth of beauty from the waves has given rise to many passages of fine descriptive painting by the poets both of ancient and modern times. Ovid touches the theme with his usual picturesque force:—

*"Sic madidos siccatur digitis Venus uda capillos,  
 Et modo maternis tecta videtur aquis."*

—*Tristia*, II. 527.

"So Cytherea, fresh from ocean's tide,  
 With rosy fingers dries her streaming hair,  
 And seems as she were robed in nought beside  
 Her own maternal waves, that veil their daughter fair."

But Mr. Tennyson has surpassed all rivals in the exquisite lines—

"Lovelier in her mood  
 Than in her mould that other, when she came  
 From barren deeps to conquer all with love;  
 And down the streaming crystal dropt; and she,  
 Far-fleeted by the purple island sides,  
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,  
 To meet her Graces, when they decked her out  
 For worship without end."

—*The Princess*, Book VII.

## ODE XXXI.

## THE POET'S PRAYER.

WHAT asks the poet, who adores  
 Apollo's virgin shrine,  
 What asks he, as he freely pours  
 The consecrating wine?

Not the rich grain, that waves along  
 Sardinia's fertile land,  
 Nor the unnumbered herds, that throng  
 Calabria's sultry strand;

Not gold, nor ivory's snowy gleam,  
 The spoil of far Cathay,  
 Nor fields, which Liris, quiet stream,  
 Gnaws silently away.

Let fortune's favoured sons the vine  
 Of fair Campania hold ;  
 The merchant quaff the rarest wine  
 From cups of gleaming gold ;

For to the gods the man is dear  
 Who scathelessly can brave,  
 Three times or more in every year,  
 The wild Atlantic wave.

Let olives, endive, mallows light  
 Be all my fare ; and health  
 Give thou, Latoüs, so I might  
 Enjoy my present wealth !



Give me but these, I ask no more,  
 These, and a mind entire—  
 An old age, not unhonoured, nor  
 Unsolaced by the lyre!



## ODE XXXII.

## TO HIS LYRE.

THEY ask for us. If 'neath green umbrage thou  
 And I, my lyre, e'er struck a note, that may  
 Outlive this year, and years beyond, sing now  
 A Roman lay;

Lyre, first by him of Lesbos tuned, the brave,  
 Who resting, when the din of fight was o'er,  
 Or when he ran, long tossed on ocean's wave,  
 His bark ashore,

Sang Bacchus and the Muses, Venus too,  
 And the sweet boy that haunts her everywhere,  
 And Lycus, for his dark eyes fair to view,  
 And his dark hair.

O shell, Apollo's pride, that crown'st the cheer  
 Of Jove's high feasts, sweet balm of wearied mind,  
 To me, that duly call on thee, give ear,  
 To me be kind!

## ODE XXXIII.

TO ALBIUS TIBULLUS.

NAY, Albius, a truce to this sighing and grieving!  
 Is Glycera worth all this torture of brain?  
 Why flatter her, lachrymose elegies weaving,  
 Because she is false for a youthfuller swain?

There's Lycoris, the maid with the small rounded forehead,  
 For Cyrus is wasting by inches away,  
 Whilst for Pholœ he, with a passion as torrid,  
 Consumes, and to him she'll have nothing to say.

The she-goats, in fact, might be sooner expected  
 Apulia's wolves for their partners to take,  
 Than a girl so divine to be ever connected  
 With such an abandoned and pitiful rake.

Such caprices hath Venus, who, rarely propitious,  
 Delights in her fetters of iron to bind  
 Those pairs whom she sees, with a pleasure malicious,  
 Unmatched both in fortune, and figure, and mind.

I myself, wooed by one that was truly a jewel,  
 In thralldom was held, which I cheerfully bore,  
 By that vulgar thing, Myrtale, though she was cruel  
 As waves that indent the Calabrian shore.

## ODE XXXIV.

## THE POET'S CONFESSION.

U<sup>N</sup>T<sup>O</sup> the gods my vows were scant  
 And few, whilst I professed the cant  
 Of philosophic lore,  
 But now I back my sails perforce,  
 Fain to retrace the beaten course,  
 I had contemned before.

For Jove, who with his forkèd levin  
 Is wont to rend the louring heaven,  
 Of late with hurtlings loud  
 His thunder-pacing steeds did urge,  
 And wingèd car along the verge  
 Of skies without a cloud ;

Whereat the huge earth reeled with fear,  
 The rivers, Styx, the portal drear  
 Of Tænarus abhorred,  
 While distant Atlas caught the sound,  
 And quivered to its farthest bound.  
 The world's great god and lord

Can change the lofty to the low,  
 The mighty ones of earth o'erthrow,  
 Advancing the obscure ;  
 Fate wrests the crown from lordly brow  
 On his to plant it, who but now  
 Was poorest of the poor.

## ODE XXXV.

TO FORTUNE.

O PLEASANT Antium's goddess queen,  
 Whose presence hath avail  
 Mortals to lift from mean estate,  
 Or change triumphal hymns elate  
 To notes of funeral wail;

Thee with heart-anxious prayer invokes  
 The rustic at the plough,  
 Thee, mistress of the ocean-wave,  
 Whoe'er Carpathia's surges brave  
 With frail Bithynian prow;

Thee Scythia's ever-roving hordes,  
 And Dacians rude revere,  
 Thee cities, tribes, Rome's dauntless band,  
 Barbaric monarchs' mothers, and  
 Empurpled tyrants fear;

Lest thou shouldst crush their pillared state  
 Beneath thy whelming foot,  
 Lest madding crowds with shrill alarms  
 Pealing the cry—"To arms! To arms!"  
 Should seated thrones uproot.

Before thee evermore doth Fate  
 Stalk phantom-like, and bear  
 In brazen hand huge nails dispread;  
 And wedges grim, and molten lead,  
 And iron clamps are there.

Thee Hope attend, and Truth rare-seen,  
In vestments snowy-dyed,  
Nor quit thee, though in changed array  
Thou turn with angry frown away  
From halls of stately pride.

But the unfaithful harlot herd  
Slink back. Howe'er they cling,  
Once to the lees the wine-vat drain,  
And shrinking from the yoke of pain,  
These summer friends take wing!

Our Cæsar's way to Britain guard,  
Earth's farthest boundary,  
And make our youthful hosts thy care,  
Who terror to the East shall bear,  
And the far Indian sea!

By brothers' blows, by brothers' blood,  
Our souls are gashed and stained.  
Alas! What horror have we fled?  
What crime not wrought? When hath the dread  
Of heav'n our youth restrained?

Where is the altar unprofaned  
By them? Oh may we see  
Thy hand new-whet their blunted swords,  
To smite Arabia's tented hordes,  
And the Massagetæ!

## ODE XXXVI.

TO NUMIDA.

SING, comrades, sing, let incense burn,  
 And blood of votive heifer flow  
 Unto the gods, to whom we owe  
 Our Numida's return !

Warm greetings many wait him here,  
 From farthest Spain restored, but none  
 From him return so warm hath won,  
 As Lamia's, chiefly dear.

His boyhood's friend, in school and play,  
 Together manhood's gown they donned ;  
 Then mark with white, all days beyond,  
 This most auspicious day.

Bid wine flow fast without control,  
 And let the dancers' merry feet  
 The ground in Salian manner beat,  
 And Bassus drain the bowl

Unbreathed, or own the mastering power  
 Of Damalis ; and roses fair,  
 And parsley's vivid green be there,  
 And lilies of an hour !

Fond looks on Damalis shall be bent,  
 But sooner shall the ivy be  
 Torn from its wedded oak, than she  
 Be from her new love rent.

## ODE XXXVII.

TO HIS COMPANIONS.

**N**OW, comrades, fill each goblet to the brim,  
 Now, now with bounding footstep strike the ground,  
 With costliest offerings every fane be crowned,  
 Laud we the gods with thousand-voicèd hymn !

It had been impious, till this glad hour  
 To bid our grandsires' Cæcuban to flow,  
 While Egypt's queen was listed to o'erthrow  
 Rome's empire, Rome itself,—home, temple, tower !

Oh doting dream !—She, with her eunuch train,  
 Effeminate and vile, to conquer us !  
 Drunk with success, and madly venturous,  
 Swift ruin quelled the fever of her brain.

Her fleet, save one poor bark, in flames and wrack,  
 The frenzied fumes, by Egypt's vintage bred,  
 Were turned to real terrors as she fled,  
 Fled from our shores with Cæsar on her track.

As hawk pursues the dove, as o'er the plains  
 Of snow-wrapt Scythia, like the driving wind,  
 The huntsman tracks the hare, he swept behind,  
 To fix that fair and fatal pest in chains.

But hers no spirit was to perish meanly ;  
 A woman, yet not womanishly weak,\*  
 She ran her galley to no sheltering creek,  
 Nor quailed before the sword, but met it queenly,

\* " My resolution's placed, and I have nothing  
 Of woman in me."

—*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act v. Sc. 2.

So to her lonely palace-walls she came,  
 With eye serene their desolation viewed,  
 And the fell asps with fearless fingers wooed  
 To dart their deadliest venom through her frame ;

Embracing death with desperate calm, that she  
 Might rob Rome's galleys of their royal prize,  
 Queen to the last, and ne'er in humble guise  
 To swell a triumph's haughty pageantry ! \*



ODE XXXVIII.

TO HIS CUPBEARER.

PERSIA'S pomp, my boy, I hate,  
 No coronals of flowerets rare  
 For me on bark of linden plait,  
 Nor seek thou, to discover where  
 The lush rose lingers late.

With unpretending myrtle twine  
 Nought else ! It fits your brows,  
 Attending me, it graces mine,  
 As I in happy ease carouse  
 Beneath the thick-leaved vine.

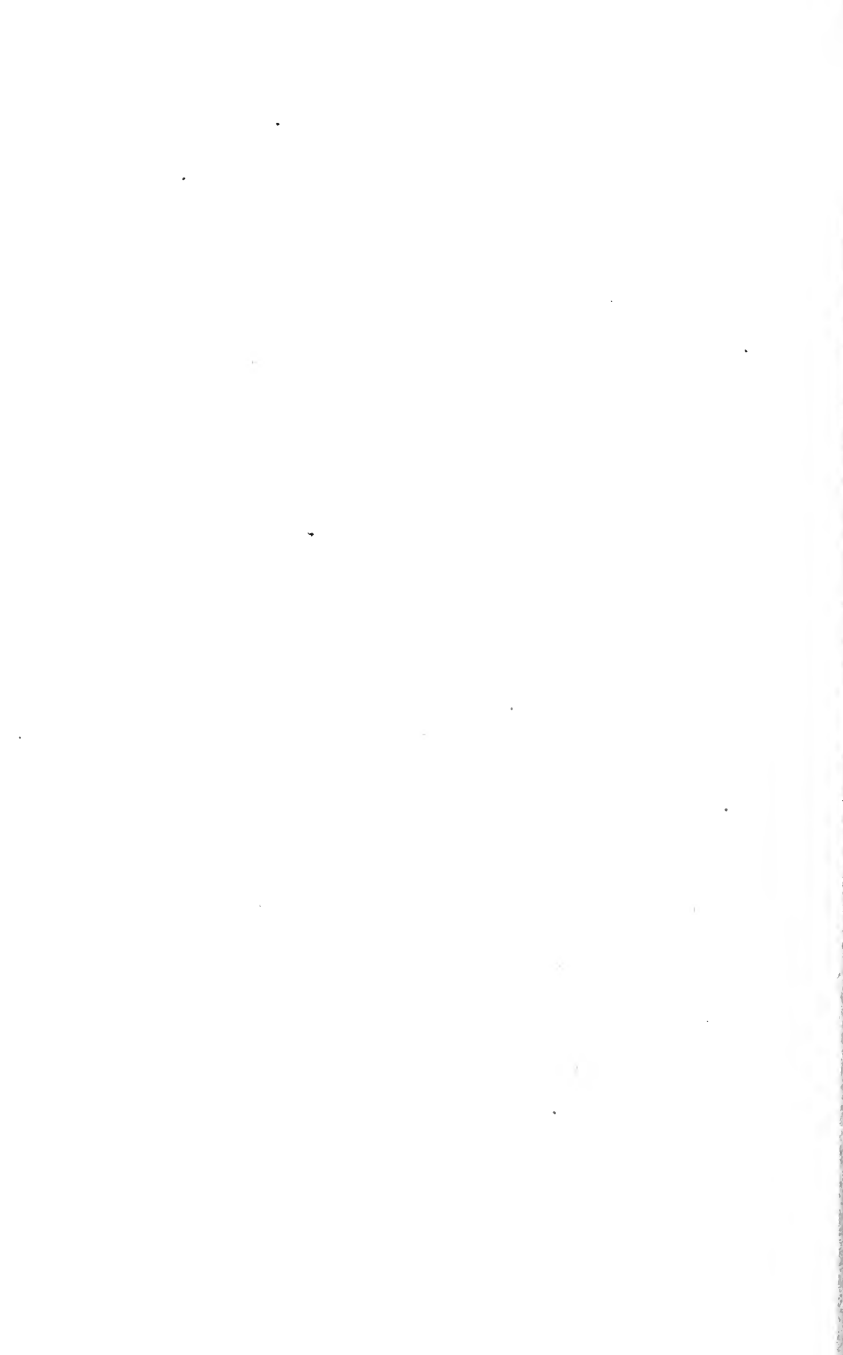
"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found  
 Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,  
 A name for ever ! lying robed and crowned,  
 Worthy a Roman spouse."

—TENNYSON'S *Dream of Fair Women*.



THE ODES

BOOK II.



## BOOK II.

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### ODE I.

TO ASINIUS POLLIO.

THE civil broils that date  
Back from Metellus' luckless consulate,  
The causes of the strife,  
Its vices, with fresh seeds of turmoil rife,  
The turns of fortune's tide,  
The leagues of chiefs to direful ends allied,  
The arms of Romans wet  
With brother's blood, not expiated yet,  
These are thy chosen theme,  
An enterprize that doth with peril teem,  
For everywhere thy tread  
On ashes falls, o'er lulled volcanoes thinly spread!

Mute for some little time  
Must be the Muse of tragedy sublime  
Within our theatres; anon,  
The task of chronicling our story done,  
Thy noble bent pursue,  
And the Cecropian buskin don anew,  
Pollio, thou shield unstained  
Of woful souls, that are of guilt arraigned,  
On whose persuasive tongue  
The senate oft in deep debate hath hung,  
Whose fame for laurels won  
In fields Dalmatian shall through farthest ages run!

Now, now our ears you pierce  
With clarions shrill, and trumpets' threatenings fierce,  
Now flashing arms affright  
Horses and riders, scattering both in flight;  
Now do I seem to hear  
The shouting of the mighty leaders near,  
And see them strike and thrust,  
Begrimed with not unhonourable dust;  
And all earth own control,  
All, all save only Cato's unrelenting soul!

Juno, and whosoe'er  
Among the gods made Afric's sons their care,  
On that same soil, which they,  
Of vengeance foiled, had turned from in dismay,  
Under Jugurtha's shade  
His victor's grandsons as an offering paid.  
Where is the plain, that by  
Its mounds sepulchral doth not testify  
To many an impious fray,  
Where Latian blood made fat the yielding clay,  
And to fell havoc's sound  
Pealed from the west to Media's farthest bound?  
What bays, what rivers are  
By ills unvisited of woful war?  
What oceans by the tide  
Of slaughter rolling red have not been dyed?  
Where shall be found the shore,  
Is not incarnadined by Roman gore?

But, froward Muse, refrain,  
Affect not thou the elegiac strain!  
With lighter touch essay  
In Dionæan cave with me some sprightlier lay!

## ODE II.

TO CRISPUS SALLUSTIUS.

SILVER, whilst buried in the mine,  
 Is lustreless and dead of hue,  
 And, Sallust, save with temperate use it shine,  
 'Tis dross to you.

The name of Proculeius shall  
 Live on through distant ages, known  
 For loving-kindness fatherlike to all  
 His brothers shown.

A spirit covetous subdued,  
 And over ampler realms you reign,  
 Than if the far-off lands of Libya you  
 Annexed to Spain.\*

\* "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city."  
 —Proverbs xvi. 32.

Ovid uses nearly the same language :—

*"Fortior est qui se quam qui fortissima vincit  
 Mænia."*

"Braver is he who doth himself subdued,  
 Than he who overcomes a fortified town."

Akin to this are the fine lines of Phineas Fletcher :—

"Wouldst thou live honoured? Clip Ambition's wing,  
 To reason's yoke the furious passions bring,  
 Thrice noble is the man who of himself is king!"

The same turn of thought, which is a favourite one with Horace, is to be found in the concluding lines of the First Epistle of the First Book,

Dropsy, self-pampered, grows : its thirst  
 Burns on until what bred the flame  
 Forsakes the veins, and those thin humours burst  
 That waned the frame.

The crowd may call Phraätes blest,  
 Enthroned where Cyrus sat erewhile,  
 But Virtue never : she from words doth wrest  
 Their gloss of guile,

To him alone the diadem  
 Of empire giving, and the bays,  
 Who, passing treasure-heaps, not once on them  
 Turns back his gaze.

joined with one of those characteristic strokes of irony, which blend so pleasantly with his didactic vein.

*" Ad summam, sapiens uno minor est Jove, dives,  
 Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum,  
 Præcipue sanus, nisi cum pituita molesta est."*

" In fine, the sage, unswayed by power or pelf,  
 Is only less than sovereign Jove himself ;  
 To him wealth, honour, freedom, beauty clings ;  
 He is, in short, a very king of kings,—  
 Body and mind superior to all woes,  
 Save when he's plagued by cold and running at the nose."

## ODE III.

TO DELLIUS.

LET not the frowns of fate  
 Disquiet thee, my friend,  
 Nor, when she smiles on thee, do thou, elate  
 With vaunting thoughts, ascend  
 Beyond the limits of becoming mirth,  
 For, Dellius, thou must die, become a clod of earth !\*

Whether thy days go down  
 In gloom, and dull regrets,  
 Or, shunning life's vain struggle for renown,  
 Its fevers and its frets,  
 Stretched on the grass, with old Falernian wine  
 Thou giv'st the thoughtless hours a rapture all divine.

Where the tall spreading pine,  
 And white-leaved poplar grow,  
 And mingling their broad boughs in leafy twine,  
 A grateful shadow throw,  
 Where down its broken bed the wimpling stream  
 Writhes on its sinuous way with many a quivering gleam.

\* "Yet weet ye well, that to a courage great  
 It is no lesse beseeing well to beare  
 The storm of Fortune's frown, or heaven's threat,  
 Than in the sunshine of her countenance cleare  
 Timely to joy, and carrie comely cheare."

—*Fairy Queen*, v. v. 38.

There wine, there perfumes bring,  
 Bring garlands of the rose,  
 Fair and too short-lived daughter of the spring,  
 While youth's bright current flows  
 Within thy veins,—ere yet hath come the hour,  
 When the dread sisters three shall clutch thee in their  
 power.\*

Thy woods, thy treasured pride,  
 Thy mansion's pleasant seat,  
 Thy lawns washed by the Tiber's yellow tide,  
 Each favourite retreat,  
 Thou must leave all—all, and thine heir shall run  
 In riot through the wealth thy years of toil have won.†

\* "*Collige, virgo, rosas, dum flos novus et nova pubes,  
 Et memor esto ævum sic properare tuum.*"

—AUSONIUS.

"Gather therefore the rose, while yet is prime,  
 For soon comes Age, that will her pride deflower;  
 Gather the rose of love, while yet is time,  
 Whilst loving thou mayst lovèd be with equal crime."

—SPENSER.

"*Festinat enim decurrere velox  
 Flosculus augustæ miseræque brevissima vitæ  
 Portio; dum bibimus, dum sarta, unguenta, puellas  
 Poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.*"

—JUVENAL, IX. 125.

"For youth, too transient flower! of life's short day  
 The shortest part, but blossoms—to decay.  
 Lo! while we give the unregarded hour  
 To revelry and joy, in Pleasure's bower,  
 While now for rosy wreaths our brows to twine,  
 And now for nymphs we call, and now for wine,  
 The noiseless foot of Time steals swiftly by,  
 And ere we dream of manhood, age is nigh."

—GIFFORD'S *Translation*.

† "Why dost thou heap up wealth, which thou must quit,  
 Or, what is worse, be left by it?  
 Why dost thou load thyself, when thou'rt to fly,  
 O man ordained to die?"



It recks not, whether thou  
Be opulent, and trace  
Thy birth from kings, or bear upon thy brow  
Stamp of a beggar's race ;  
In rags or splendour, death at thee alike,  
That no compassion hath for aught of earth, will strike.

One road, and to one bourne  
We all are goaded. Late  
Or soon will issue from the urn  
Of unrelenting Fate  
The lot that in yon bark exiles us all  
To undiscovered shores, from which is no recall.

Why dost thou build up stately rooms on high,  
Thou, who art underground to lie?  
Thou sow'st and plantest, but no fruit must see,  
For Death, alas ! is sowing thee."

—COWLEY.

"My parks, my walks, my manors that I had,  
Even now forsake me ; and of all my lands  
Is nothing left me, but my body's length."

—SHAKESPEARE. *Henry VI.*, Pt. III. Act v. Sc. 2.

## ODE IV.

TO XANTHIAS.

NAY, Xanthias, my friend, never blush, man—no, no !  
 Why should you not love your own maid, if you  
 please?

Briseis of old, with her bosom of snow,  
 Brought the haughty Achilles himself to his knees.

By his captive Tecmessa was Telamon's son,  
 Stout Ajax, to willing captivity tamed ;  
 Atrides, in triumph, was wholly undone,  
 With love for the slave of his war-spear inflamed,

In the hot hour of triumph, when, quelled by the spear  
 Of Pelides, in heaps the barbarians lay ;  
 And Troy, with her Hector no longer to fear,  
 To the war-wearied Greeks fell an easier prey.

For aught that you know, now, fair Phyllis may be  
 The shoot of some highly respectable stem ;  
 Nay, she counts, at the least, a few kings in her tree,  
 And laments the lost acres once lorded by them.

Never think that a creature so exquisite grew  
 In the haunts where but vice and dishonour are known,  
 Nor deem that a girl so unselfish, so true,  
 Had a mother 'twould shame thee to take for thine own.\*

\* One fancies the humble object of Phocian Xanthias' admiration to have been like her who is so exquisitely described by Sir Walter Scott's friend in the lines :—

“ Lowly beauty, dear friend, beams with primitive grace,  
 And 'tis innocence' self plays the rogue in her face.”

—LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, vol. i. p. 218.

I extol with free heart, and with fancy as free  
 Her sweet face, fine ankles, and tapering arms,  
 How! Jealous? Nay, trust an old fellow like me,  
 Who can feel, but not follow, where loveliness charms.



## ODE V.

## TO A FRIEND.

**H**AVE patience! She's plainly too tender, you see,  
 The yoke on her delicate shoulders to bear,  
 So young as she is, fit she never could be  
 His task with the gentlest yoke-fellow to share,  
 Or brook the assault of the ponderous bull,  
 Rushing headlong the fire of his passion to cool.

At present your heifer finds all her delight  
 In wandering o'er the green meadows at will,  
 In cooling her sides, when the sun is at height,  
 In the iciest pools of some mountain-fed rill,  
 Or 'mid the dank osier-beds bounding in play  
 With the young calves, as sportive and skittish as they.

For unripe grapes to long is mere folly; soon, too,  
 Many-tinted Autumnus with purple will dye  
 Thy clusters that now wear so livid a hue;  
 And so after thee, soon, her glances will fly,  
 For merciless Time to her count will assign  
 The swift-speeding years, as she takes them from thine.

And then will thy Lalage long for a lord,  
 Nor shrink from the secrets of conjugal joy ;  
 By thee she will be, too, more fondly adored,  
 Than Pholoë's self, or than Chloris the coy,  
 Her beautiful shoulders resplendently white  
 As the moon, when it silvers the ocean by night ;

Or as Gnidian Gyges, whom were you to place  
 In the midst of a bevy of sunny-browed girls,  
 So boyish, so girlish at once is his face,  
 So silken the flow of his clustering curls,  
 'Twould puzzle the skilfullest judge to declare,  
 If Gyges or they were more maidenly fair.



ODE VI.

TO SEPTIMIUS.

**S** EPTIMIUS, thou who wouldst, I know,  
 With me to distant Gades go,  
 And visit the Cantabrian fell,  
 Whom all our triumphs cannot quell,  
 And even the sands barbarian brave,  
 Where ceaseless seethes the Moorish wave ;

May Tibur, that delightful haunt,  
 Reared by an Argive emigrant,  
 The tranquil haven be, I pray,  
 For my old age to wear away,  
 Oh, may it be the final bourne  
 To one with war and travel worn !

But should the cruel Fates decree,  
That this, my friend, shall never be,  
Then to Galæsus, river sweet  
To skin-clad flocks, will I retreat,  
And those rich meads, where sway of yore  
Laconian Phalanthus bore.

In all the world no spot there is,  
That wears for me a smile like this,  
The honey of whose thymy fields  
May vie with what Hymettus yields,  
Where berries clustering every slope  
May with Venafrum's greenest cope.

There Jove accords a lengthened spring,  
And winters wanting winter's sting,  
And sunny Aulon's broad incline  
Such mettle puts into the vine,  
Its clusters need not envy those  
Which fiery Falernum grows.

Thyself and me that spot invites,  
Those pleasant fields, those sunny heights ;  
And there, to life's last moments true,  
Wilt thou with some fond tears bedew—  
The last sad tribute love can lend—  
The ashes of thy poet friend.

## ODE VII.

TO POMPEIUS VARUS.

DEAR comrade in the days when thou and I  
 With Brutus took the field, his perils bore,  
 Who hath restored thee, freely as of yore,  
 To thy home gods, and loved Italian sky,

Pompey, who wert the first my heart to share ;  
 With whom full oft I've sped the lingering day,  
 Quaffing bright wine, as in our tents we lay,  
 With Syrian spikenard on our glistening hair ?

With thee I shared Philippi's headlong flight,  
 My shield behind me left, which was not well,  
 When all that brave array was broke, and fell  
 In the vile dust full many a towering wight.

But me, poor trembler, swift Mercurius bore,  
 Wrapped in a cloud, through all the hostile din,  
 Whilst war's tumultuous eddies, closing in,  
 Swept thee away into the strife once more.

Then pay to Jove the feasts, that are his fee,  
 And stretch at ease these warworn limbs of thine  
 Beneath my laurel's shade ; nor spare the wine  
 Which I have treasured through long years for thee.

Pour till it touch the shining goblet's rim  
 Care-drowning Massic : let rich ointments flow  
 From amplest conchs ! No measure we shall know !  
 What ! Shall we wreaths of oozy parsley trim,

Or simple myrtle? Whom will Venus send  
 To rule our revel? Wild my draughts shall be  
 As Thracian Bacchanals', for 'tis sweet to me,  
 To lose my wits, when I regain my friend.



## ODE VIII.

TO BARINE.

IF e'er, in vengeance for thy faithlessness,  
 Heaven had but made thy charms one charm the less,  
 Blackened one tooth, or tarnished one bright nail,  
 Then I, Barine, might believe thy tale.  
 But soon as thou hast laid all kinds of vows  
 And plighted oaths on those perfidious brows,  
 Thy beauty heightens into rarer dies,  
 And all our young men haunt thy steps with feverish eyes.

It profits thee, fair mischief, thus to spurn  
 The deep vows plighted by thy mother's urn,  
 By all the silent stars that gem the night,  
 And by the gods, whom death may never blight.  
 Venus herself doth smile to hear thee swear,  
 Smile the sweet nymphs beneath their sunny hair;  
 And Cupid, unrelenting boy, doth smile,  
 Pointing on gory stone his burning shafts the while.

To thee our youth's best flower in homage kneels,  
 New slaves bend daily at thy chariot-wheels;  
 And they, who oft have sworn to haunt no more  
 Thy fatal home, still linger as before.

Mothers all dread thee for their boys, and old  
 Fond fathers fear thy havoc with their gold ;  
 The bane art thou of every new-made bride,  
 Lest thy soft air should waft her husband from her side.

—o—

THE SAME.

RE-TRANSLATED.

**I**F for thy perjuries and broken truth,  
 Barine, thou hadst ever come to harm,  
 Hadst lost, but in a nail, or blackened tooth,  
 One single charm,

I'd trust thee ; but when thou art most forsworn,  
 Thou blazest forth with beauty most supreme,  
 And of our young men art, noon, night, and morn,  
 The thought, the dream.

To thee 'tis gain thy mother's dust to mock,  
 To mock the silent watch-fires of the night,  
 All heaven, the gods, on whom death's icy shock  
 Can never light.

Smiles Venus self, I vow, to see thy arts,  
 The guileless nymphs and cruel Cupid smile,  
 And, smiling, whets on bloody stone his darts  
 Of fire the while.

Nay more, our youth grow up to be thy prey,  
 New slaves throng round, and those who crouched at first,



Though oft they threaten, leave not for a day  
Thy roof accurst.

Thee mothers for their unfledged younglings dread ;  
Thee niggard old men dread, and brides new-made,  
In misery lest their lords neglect their bed,  
By thee delayed.



## ODE IX.

TO VALGIUS.

NOT always from the clouds are rains  
Descending on the oozy plains,  
Not always o'er the Caspian deep  
Do gusts of angry tempest sweep,  
Nor month on month, the long year through,  
Dear Valgius, valued friend and true,  
Is frost's benumbing mantle round  
The high lands of Armenia wound ;  
Not always groan Garganus' oaks  
Before the north wind's furious strokes,  
Nor is the ash-tree always seen,  
Stript of its garniture of green ;  
Yet thou alway in strains forlorn  
Thy Mystes dead dost fondly mourn,  
Lamenting still at Hesper's rise,  
And when the rapid sun he flies.

Remember, friend, that sage old man,  
Whose years were thrice our common span,

Did not through all their lengthened tale  
His loved Antilochus bewail :  
Nor did his parents, lonely left,  
Of their still budding darling rest,  
Nor Phrygian sisters evermore  
The slaughtered Troilus deplore.

Forbear, then, longer to complain,  
Renounce this enervating strain,  
And rather let us, thou and I,  
Combine to sing in measures high  
The trophies newly won by great  
Augustus Cæsar for the state ;  
Niphates' icy peak, the proud  
Euphrates, added to the crowd  
Of nations, that confess our power,  
A humbler river from this hour,  
And the Gelonians forced to rein  
Their steeds within a bounded plain.

## ODE X.

TO LICINIUS.

IF thou wouldst live secure and free,  
 Thou wilt not keep far out at sea  
 Licinius, evermore ;  
 Nor, fearful of the gales that sweep  
 The ocean wide, too closely creep  
 Along the treacherous shore.

The man, who, with a soul serene,  
 Doth cultivate the golden mean,  
 Escapes alike from all  
 The squalor of a sordid cot,  
 And from the jealousies begot  
 By wealth in lordly hall.

The mighty pine is ever most  
 By wild winds swayed about and tossed,  
 With most disastrous crash  
 Fall high-topped towers, and ever, where  
 The mountains' summit points in air,  
 Do bolted lightnings flash.

When fortune frowns, a well-trained mind  
 Will hope for change ;\* when she is kind,

\* "*Sed credula vitam  
 Spes fovet, et melius cras fore semper ait.*"

—TIBULLUS, II. 6. 19.

"By trustful hope our life is comforted,  
 For ever whispering of a joy to be."

A change no less will fear :  
 If haggard winters o'er the land  
 By Jove are spread, at his command  
 In time they disappear.\*

Though now they may, be sure of this,  
 Things will not always go amiss ;  
 Not always bends in ire  
 Apollo his dread bow, but takes  
 The lyre, and from her trance awakes  
 The Muse with touch of fire.

Though sorrows strike, and comrades shrink,  
 Yet never let your spirits sink,  
 But to yourself be true ;  
 So wisely, when yourself you find  
 Scudding before too fair a wind,  
 Take in a reef or two.†

\* " The darkest day,  
 Live till to-morrow, will have passed away."

—COWPER.

† " *Tu quoque formida nimium sublimia semper ;  
 Propositique memor, contrahe vela, tui.*"

—OVID, *Tristia*, III. 4. 31.

" But ever hold too soaring thoughts in fear,  
 And, mindful of your purpose, furl your sails."

## ODE XI.

TO QUINTIUS HIRPINUS.

WHAT the warlike Cantabrian or Scyth may design,  
 Dear Quintius Hirpinus, ne'er stay to divine,  
 With the broad Adriatic 'twixt them and yourself,  
 You surely may lay all your fears on the shelf.

And fret not your soul with uneasy desires  
 For the wants of a life, which but little requires ;  
 Youth and beauty fade fast, and age, sapless and hoar,  
 Tastes of love and the sleep that comes lightly no more.

Spring flowers bloom not always fresh, fragrant, and bright,  
 The moon beams not always full-orbed on the night ;  
 Then wherefore should you, who are mortal, outwear  
 Your soul with a profitless burden of care ?

Say, why should we not, flung at ease 'neath this pine,  
 Or a plane-tree's broad umbrage, quaff gaily our wine,  
 While the odours of Syrian nard, and the rose  
 Breathe sweet from locks tipped, and just tipped with Time's  
 snows.

'Tis Bacchus, great Bacchus, alone has the art  
 To drive away cares, that are eating the heart.  
 What boy, then, shall best in the brook's deepest pool  
 Our cups of the fiery Falernian cool ?

And who from her home shall fair Lydè seduce,  
 And bring to our revel that charming recluse ?  
 Bid her haste with her ivory lyre to the spot,  
 Tying up her brown hair in a plain Spartan knot.

## ODE XII.

TO MÆCENAS.

**B**ID me not sing to my nerveless string  
 The wars of Numantia long and bloody,  
 Nor Hannibal dread, nor the ocean's bed  
 With the gore of our Punic foemen ruddy;

Nor the Lapithæ fierce, nor Hylæus flushed  
 With wine, nor the earth-born brood Titanic,  
 Whom the death-dealing hand of Alcides crushed,  
 Though they smote the Saturnian halls with panic.

And thou, my Mæcenas, shalt fitlier tell  
 The battles of Cæsar in stateliest story,  
 Tell of kings, who defied us with menaces fell,  
 Led on through our streets in the triumph's glory.

My muse to Licymnia alone replies,  
 To her warbling voice, that divinely sways thee,  
 To the gleam of her flashing and lustrous eyes,  
 And true heart that passion for passion repays thee.

Ah, well doth the roundel beseem her charms,  
 Sparkling her wit, and, with loveliest vestals,  
 Most worthy is she to enlace her arms  
 In the dances of Dian's hilarious festals.

Would you, friend, for Phrygia's hoarded gold,  
 Or all that Achæmenes self possesses,  
 Or e'en for what Araby's coffers hold,  
 Barter one lock of her clustering tresses,

While she bends down her throat to your burning kiss,  
 Or, fondly cruel, the joy denies you,  
 She'd have you snatch, or at times the bliss  
 Herself will snatch, and with joy surprise you?



## ODE XIII.

TO THE TREE BY WHOSE FALL HIS LIFE WAS  
 ENDANGERED.

WHO'E'R he was, (his name be banned !)  
 In evil hour he planted thee,  
 And with a sacrilegious hand  
 He nursed, and trained thee up to be  
 The bane of his succeeding race,  
 And of our hamlet the disgrace.

He strangled, ay, and with a zest,  
 His very father, and at dead  
 Of night stole in upon his guest,  
 And stabbed him sleeping in his bed ;  
 Brewed Colchian poisons in his time,  
 And practised every sort of crime.

All this he must have done—or could—  
 I'm sure,—the wretch, that stuck thee down,  
 Thou miserable stump of wood,  
 To topple on thy master's crown,  
 Who ne'er designed thee any harm,  
 Here on my own, my favourite farm.

No mortal due provision makes  
 'Gainst ills which any hour may fall ;  
 The Carthaginian sailor quakes  
 To think of a Levantine squall,  
 But feels no terror for the fate,  
 That elsewhere may his bark await.

Our soldiers dread the arrows sped  
 By Parthians shooting as they flee ;  
 And in their turn the Parthians dread  
 The chains and keeps of Italy ;  
 But death will tear, as now it tears,  
 Whole nations down at unawares.

How nearly in her realms of gloom  
 I dusky Proserpine had seen,  
 Seen Æacus dispensing doom,  
 And the Elysian fields serene,  
 Heard Sappho to her lute complain  
 Of unrequited passion's pain ;

Heard thee, too, O Alcæus, tell,  
 Striking the while thy golden lyre,  
 With fuller note and statelier swell,  
 The sorrows and disasters dire  
 Of warfare and the ocean deep,  
 And those that far in exile weep.

While shades round either singer throng,  
 And the deservèd tribute pay  
 Of sacred silence to their song,\*  
 Yet chiefly crowd to hear the lay  
 Of battles old to story known,  
 And haughty tyrants overthrown.

\* " Worthy of sacred silence to be heard."

—*Paradise Lost*, v. 555.



What wonder they their ears to feast,  
Should thickly throng, when by these lays  
Entranced, the hundred-headed beast  
Drops his black ears in sweet amaze,  
And even the snakes are charmed, as they  
Among the Furies' tresses play.

Nay, even Prometheus, and the sire  
Of Pelops, cheated of their pains,  
Forget a while their doom of ire  
In listening to the wondrous strains;  
Nor doth Orion longer care  
To hunt the lynx or lion there.\*

\* " Their song was partial, but the harmony  
(What could it less, when Spirits immortal sing?)  
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
The thronging audience."

—*Paradise Lost*, II. 552.

## ODE XIV.

TO POSTHUMUS.

AH, Posthumus, the years, the fleeting years  
 Still onwards, onwards glide ;  
 Nor mortal virtue may  
 Time's wrinkling fingers stay,  
 Nor Age's sure advance, nor Death's all-conquering stride.

Hope not by daily hecatombs of bulls  
 From Pluto to redeem  
 Thy life, who holds thrice vast  
 Geryon fettered fast,  
 And Tityus, by the waves of yonder rueful stream.

Sad stream, we all are doomed one day to cross,  
 Ay, all that live by bread,  
 Whate'er our lot may be,  
 Great lords of high degree,  
 Alike with peasant churls, who scantily are fed.

In vain shall we war's bloody conflict shun,  
 And the hoarse scudding gale  
 Of Adriatic seas,  
 Or fly the southern breeze,  
 That through the Autumn hours wafts pestilence and bale.

For all must view Cocyus' pitchy tide  
 Meandering slow, and see  
 The accursèd Danaids moil,  
 And that dread stone recoil,  
 Sad Sisyphus is doomed to upheave eternally.

Land, home, and winsome wife must all be left ;  
 And cypresses abhorred,  
 Alone of all the trees  
 That now your fancy please,  
 Shall shade his dust, who was a little while their lord.

Then, too, your long-imprisoned Cæcuban  
 A worthier heir shall drain,  
 And with a lordlier wine,  
 Than at the feasts divine  
 Of pontiffs flows, your floor in wassailry shall stain.

—o—

### ODE XV.

#### ON THE PREVAILING LUXURY.

SOON regal piles each rood of land  
 Will from the farmer's ploughshare take,  
 Soon ponds be seen on every hand  
 More spacious than the Lucrine lake.

Soon the unwedded plane displace  
 The vine-wreathed elm ; and violet bed  
 And myrtle bush, and all the race  
 Of scented shrubs their fragrance shed,

Where fertile olive thickets made  
 Their owner rich in days of old ;  
 And laurels with thick-woven shade  
 At bay the scorching sunbeams hold.

It was not so, when Romulus  
Our greatness fostered in its prime,  
Nor did our great forefathers thus,  
In unshorn Cato's simple time.

Man's private fortunes then were low,  
The public income great ; in these  
Good times no long-drawn portico  
Caught for its lord the northern breeze.

Nor did the laws our sires permit  
Sods dug at random to despise,  
As for their daily homes unfit ;  
And yet they bade our cities rise

More stately at the public charge,  
And did, to their religion true,  
The temples of the gods enlarge,  
And with fair-sculptured stones renew.

## ODE XVI.

TO GROSPHUS.

FOR ease he doth the gods implore,  
 Who, tossing on the wide  
 Ægean billows, sees the black clouds hide  
 The moon, and the sure stars appear no more,  
 The shipman's course to guide.

For ease the sons of Thracia cry,  
 In battle uncontrolled,  
 For ease the graceful-quivered Median bold,  
 That ease which purple, Grosphus, cannot buy,  
 Nor wealth of gems or gold.

For hoarded treasure cannot keep  
 Disquietudes at bay,  
 Nor can the consul's lictor drive away  
 The brood of dark sollicitudes, that sweep  
 Round gilded ceilings gay.

He lives on little, and is blest,  
 On whose plain board the bright  
 Salt-cellar shines, which was his sire's delight,  
 Nor coward fears, nor sordid greed's unrest  
 Disturb his slumbers light.

Why should we still project and plan,  
 We creatures of an hour?  
 Why fly from clime to clime, new regions scour?  
 Where is the exile, who, since time began,  
 To fly from self had power?\*

Fell Care climbs brazen galleys' sides;  
 Nor troops of horse can fly  
 Her foot, which than the stag's is swifter, ay,  
 Swifter than Eurus, when he madly rides  
 The clouds along the sky.

Careless what lies beyond to know,  
 And turning to the best  
 The present, meet life's bitters with a jest,  
 And smile them down; since nothing here below  
 Is altogether blest.†

In manhood's prime Achilles died,  
 Tithonus by the slow  
 Decay of age was wasted to a show,  
 And Time may what it hath to thee denied  
 On me, perchance, bestow.

\* "Our sorrows still pursue us; and when you  
 The ruined Capitol shall view,  
 And statues, a disordered heap, you can  
 Not cure yet the disease of man,  
 And banish your own thoughts. Go, travel where  
 Another sun and stars appear,  
 And land not touched by any covetous fleet,  
 And yet even there yourself you'll meet."

—HABINGTON'S *Castara*.

† "*Medio de fonte leporum  
 Surgit amari aliquid, quod ipsis in floribus angit.*"

—I. UCRETIVS.

"Full from the fount of joy's delicious springs  
 Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings."

—BYRON.

Round thee low countless herds and kine  
 Of Sicily; the mare  
 Apt for the chariot paws for thee the air,  
 And Afric's costliest dyes incarnadine  
 The wools which thou dost wear.\*

To me a farm of modest size,  
 And slender vein of song,  
 Such as in Greece flowed vigorous and strong,  
 Kind fate hath given, and spirit to despise  
 The base malignant throng.

"*Usque adeo nulla est sincera voluptas,  
 Sollicitumque aliquid lætis intervenit.*"

—OVID, *Metam.* 7.

"Where is the pleasure marred by no alloy?  
 Some apprehension ever haunts our joy."

"*Scilicet interdum miscentur tristia lætis  
 Nec populum toto pectore festa juvant.*"

—OVID, *Fasti*, 2.

"Grief mingles with our mirth, when at its best,  
 And robs our feasts of some part of their zest."

\* Literally, "wools are thine, twice steeped in African dye." So Spenser, in his *Virgil's Gnat*, line 97:—

"Ne cares he, if the fleece which him arrays  
 Be not twice steepèd in Assyrian dye."

## ODE XVII.

TO MÆCENAS.

WHY wilt thou kill me with thy boding fears?  
 Why, O Mæcenas, why?

Before thee lies a train of happy years;

Yes, nor the gods nor I

Could brook that thou shouldst first be laid in dust

Who art my stay, my glory, and my trust!

Ah, if untimely Fate should snatch thee hence.

Thee, of my soul a part,

Why should I linger on, with deadened sense,

And ever-aching heart,

A worthless fragment of a fallen shrine?

No, no, one day shall see thy death and mine!

Think not, that I have sworn a bootless oath;

Yes, we shall go, shall go,

Hand linked in hand, whene'er thou leadest, both

The last sad road below!

Me neither the Chimæra's fiery breath,

Nor Gyges, even could Gyges rise from death,

With all his hundred hands from thee shall sever;

For in such sort it hath

Pleased the dread Fates, and Justice potent ever,

To interweave our path.

Beneath whatever aspect thou wert born,

Libra, or Scorpion fierce, or Capricorn,



The blustering tyrant of the western deep,  
This well I know, my friend,  
Our stars in wondrous wise one orbit keep,  
And in one radiance blend.  
From thee were Saturn's baleful rays afar  
Averted by great Jove's refulgent star,

And his hand stayed Fate's downward-swooping wing,  
When thrice with glad acclaim  
The teeming theatre was heard to ring,  
And thine the honoured name :  
So had the falling timber laid me low,  
But Pan in mercy warded off the blow,

Pan who keeps watch o'er easy souls like mine.  
Remember, then, to rear  
In gratitude to Jove a votive shrine,  
And slaughter many a steer,  
Whilst I, as fits, an humbler tribute pay,  
And a meek lamb upon his altar lay.

## ODE XVIII.

TO A MISER.

**W**ITHIN my dwelling you behold  
 Nor ivory, nor roof of gold;  
 There no Hymettian rafters weigh  
 On columns from far Africa;  
 Nor Attalus' imperial chair  
 Have I usurped, a spurious heir,  
 Nor client dames of high degree  
 Laconian purples spin for me;  
 But a true heart and genial vein  
 Of wit are mine, and rich men deign,  
 Poor as I am, to seek my door.  
 For nought beyond do I implore  
 The gods, nor crave my potent friend  
 A larger bounty to extend,  
 With what he gave completely blest,  
 My happy little Sabine nest.

Day treads down day, and sinks amain,  
 And new moons only wax to wane,  
 Yet you, upon death's very brink,  
 Of piling marbles only think,  
 That yet are in the quarry's womb,  
 And, all unmindful of the tomb,  
 Rear gorgeous mansions everywhere;  
 Nay, as though earth too bounded were,  
 With bulwarks huge thrust back the sea,  
 That chafes and breaks on Baiaë.

What though you move the ancient bound,  
That marks your humble neighbour's ground,  
And avariciously o'erleap  
The limits right should bid you keep?  
Where lies your gain, that driven from home  
Both wife and husband forth must roam,  
Bearing their household gods close pressed  
With squalid babes upon their breast?  
Still for the man of wealth, 'mid all  
His pomp and pride of place, the hall  
Of sure-devouring Orcus waits  
With its inevitable gates.

Then why this ceaseless vain unrest?  
Earth opens her impartial breast  
To prince and beggar both; nor might  
Gold e'er tempt Hell's grim satellite  
To waft astute Prometheus o'er  
From yonder ghastly Stygian shore.  
Proud Tantalus and all his race  
He curbs within that rueful place;  
The toil-worn wretch, who cries for ease,  
Invoked or not, he hears and frees.

## ODE XIX.

TO BACCHUS.

**B**ACCHUS I've seen, (no fable is my song !)  
 Where far among the rocks the hills are rooted,  
 His strains dictating to a listening throng,  
 Of nymphs, and prick-eared Satyrs cloven-footed !

Evöe ! The dread is on my soul even now,  
 Filled with the god my breast is heaving wildly !  
 Evöe ! Oh spare, Lyæus, spare me, thou,  
 And o'er me wield thine awful thyrsus mildly !

Now may I dare to sing of Bacchants bold,  
 To sing of wine in fountains redly rushing,  
 Of milky streams, and honey's liquid gold  
 From hollow trunks in woods primeval gushing.

Now may I chant her honours, too, thy bride,  
 Who high among the stars is throned in glory,  
 The halls of Pentheus shattered in their pride,  
 And of Lycurgus the disastrous story.

Thee own as lord great rivers, barbarous seas ;  
 Thou, where afar the mountain peaks are shining,  
 Flushed with the grape dost revel, there at ease  
 Thy Bacchant's locks unharmed with vipers twining.

Thou, when the banded giants, impious crew !  
 By mountain piled on mountain top were scaling  
 Thy sire's domains, didst hurl back Rhæcus, through  
 Thy lion's claws, and jawbone fell prevailing.

Though fitter for the dance, and mirth, and jest,  
 Than for the battle's deadly shock reputed,  
 Thou didst approve thyself, o'er all the rest  
 Alike for peace or warfare aptly suited.

Thee, gloriously bedecked with horn of gold,  
 With gently wagging tail soothed Cerberus greeted  
 And licked thy limbs and feet with tongue threefold,  
 As from his shady realm thy steps retreated.



## ODE XX.

TO MÆCENAS.

**O**N pinion newly plumed and strong  
 I'll cleave the liquid air  
 Predestinate, true child of song!  
 A double form to wear.  
 Earth shall not keep me from the skies,  
 I'll pierce the smoke of towns,  
 And, soaring far aloft, despise  
 Their envy and their frowns.

Though cradled at a poor man's hearth,  
 His offspring, I shall not  
 Go down to mix with common earth,  
 Forgetting and forgot.  
 No! I, whom thou, Mæcenas, dear,  
 Dost mark with thy esteem,  
 Shall never pine, a phantom drear,  
 By sad Cocytus' stream.

Even now I feel the change begin !  
And see, along my thighs  
It creeps and creeps, the wrinkling skin,  
In sturdy swanlike guise ;  
My body all above assumes  
The bird, and white as snow  
Along my shoulders airy plumes  
Down to my fingers grow.

Now swiffler borne on pinions bold  
Than Icarus of yore,  
The Bosphorus shall I behold,  
And hear its billows roar :  
Shall o'er Getulia's whirling sands,  
Canorous bird, career,  
And view Hyperborean lands,  
From heaven's own azure clear.

My fame the Colchian, and forlorn  
Gelonian yet shall know,  
The Dacian, too, who seems to scorn,  
But dreads his Marsic foe.  
The Spaniard of an after time  
My minstrel power shall own,  
And I be hailed a bard sublime  
By him that drinks the Rhone.

Then sing no dirge above my bier,  
No grief be idly spent !  
Dishonour lies in every tear,  
Disgrace in each lament.  
All clamours loud of woe forbear !  
Respect my nobler doom,  
And those superfluous honours spare,  
Which load a vulgar tomb !

THE ODES

BOOK III.





## BOOK III.

### ODE I.

IN PRAISE OF CONTENTMENT.

YE rabble rout, avaunt!  
Your vulgar din give o'er,  
Whilst I, the Muses' own hierophant,  
To the pure ears of youths and virgins chant  
In strains unheard before!

Great kings, whose frown doth make  
Their crouching vassals quake,  
Themselves must own  
The mastering sway of Jove, imperial god,  
Who, from the crash of giants overthrown,  
Triumphant honours took, and by his nod  
Shakes all creation's zone.

Whate'er our rank may be,  
We all partake one common destiny!  
In fair expanse of soil,  
Teeming with rich returns of wine and oil,  
His neighbour one outvies;  
Another claims to rise  
To civic dignities,  
Because of ancestry, and noble birth,  
Or fame, or proved pre-eminence of worth,

Or troops of clients, clamorous in his cause;  
Still Fate doth grimly stand,  
And with impartial hand  
The lots of lofty and of lowly draws  
From that capacious urn,  
Whence every name that lives is shaken in its turn.

To him, above whose guilty head,  
Suspended by a thread,  
The naked sword is hung for evermore,  
Not feasts Sicilian shall  
With all their cates recall  
That zest the simplest fare could once inspire ;  
Nor song of birds, nor music of the lyre  
Shall his lost sleep restore :  
But gentle sleep shuns not  
The rustic's lowly cot,  
Nor mossy bank, o'ercanopied with trees,  
Nor Tempe's leafy vale stirred by the western breeze.

The man, who lives content with whatso'er  
Sufficeth for his needs,  
The storm-tossed ocean vexeth not with care,  
Nor the fierce tempest which Arcturus breeds,  
When in the sky he sets,  
Nor that which Hædus, at his rise, begets :  
Nor will he grieve, although  
His vines be all laid low  
Beneath the driving hail,  
Nor though, by reason of the drenching rain,  
Or heat, that shrivels up his fields like fire,  
Or fierce extremities of winter's ire,  
Blight shall o'erwhelm his fruit-trees and his grain,  
And all his farm's delusive promise fail.

The fish are conscious that a narrower bound  
Is drawn the seas around  
By masses huge hurled down into the deep ;  
There, at the bidding of a lord, for whom  
Not all the land he owns is ample room,  
Do the contractor and his labourers heap  
Vast piles of stone, the ocean back to sweep.  
But let him climb in pride,  
That lord of halls unblest,  
Up to his lordly nest,  
Yet ever by his side  
Climb Terror and Unrest ;  
Within the brazen galley's sides  
Care, ever wakeful, flits,  
And at his back, when forth in state he rides,  
Her withering shadow sits.

If thus it fare with all ;  
If neither marbles from the Phrygian mine,  
Nor star-bright robes of purple and of pall,  
Nor the Falernian vine,  
Nor costliest balsams, fetched from farthest Ind,  
Can soothe the restless mind ;  
Why should I choose  
To rear on high, as modern spendthrifts use,  
A lofty hall, might be the home for kings,  
With portals vast, for Malice to abuse,  
Or Envy make her theme to point a tale ;  
Or why for wealth, which new-born trouble brings,  
Exchange my Sabine vale ?

## ODE II.

TO HIS COMPANIONS.

**I**N war's stern school our youth should be  
 Steeled stoutly to endure  
 The ills which sharp necessity  
 Inflicts upon the poor ;  
 To make the Parthians fly in fear  
 Before the terrors of their spear ;

To live alert at danger's call,  
 Encamped on heath or down ;  
 Then, as they view him from the wall  
 Of their beleaguered town,  
 With sighs the warring monarch's dame  
 And virgin daughter shall exclaim :

" Oh grant, ye gods, our royal lord,  
 Unskilled in war's array,  
 Provoke not, by his bootless sword,  
 Yon lion to the fray,  
 Who rushes with infuriate roar  
 Through carnage, dropping gouts of gore ! "

For our dear native land to die  
 Is glorious and sweet ;  
 And death the coward slaves that fly  
 Pursues with steps as fleet,  
 Nor spares the loins and backs of those  
 Unwarlike youths who shun their foes.

Worth, all-indifferent to the spurns  
Of vulgar souls profane,  
The honours wears, it proudly earns,  
Unclouded by a stain;  
Nor grasps, nor lays the fasces down,  
As fickle mobs applaud or frown.

Worth, which heaven's gate to those unbars,  
Who never should have died,  
A pathway cleaves among the stars,  
To meaner souls denied,  
Soaring in scorn far far away  
From vulgar crowds and sordid clay.

For faithful silence, too, there is  
A guerdon sure : who'er  
Has once divulged the mysteries  
Of Ceres' shrine, shall ne'er  
Partake my roof, nor yet shall he  
In the same vessel sail with me.

For oft has Jove, when slighted, swept  
Away with sons of shame  
The souls which have their whiteness kept,  
And punishment, though lame  
Of foot, has rarely failed to smite  
The knave, how swift soe'er his flight.

## ODE III.

## THE APOTHEOSIS OF ROMULUS.

HE that is just, and firm of will,  
 Doth not before the fury quake  
 Of mobs that instigate to ill,  
 Nor hath the tyrant's menace skill  
 His fixed resolve to shake ;

Nor Auster, at whose wild command  
 The Adriatic billows dash,  
 Nor Jove's dread thunder-launching hand,  
 Yea, if the globe should fall, he'll stand  
 Serene amidst the crash.

By constancy like this sustained,  
 Pollux of yore, and Hercules  
 The starry eminences gained,  
 Where Cæsar, with lips purple-stained,  
 Quaffs nectar, stretched at ease.

Thou, by this power, Sire Bacchus, led,  
 To bear the yoke thy pards didst school,  
 Through this same power Quirinus fled,  
 By Mars' own horses charioted,  
 The Acherontine pool.

What time the gods to council came,  
 And Juno spoke with gracious tone,  
 "That umpire lewd and doomed to shame,  
 And his adulterous foreign dame  
 Troy, Troy have overthrown;

- “ Troy doomed to perish in its pride  
By chaste Minerva and by me,  
Her people, and their guileful guide,  
Since false Laomedon denied  
The gods their promised fee.
- “ The Spartan wanton’s shameless guest  
No longer flaunts in brave array,  
Nor screened by Hector’s valiant breast  
Doth Priam’s perjured house arrest  
My Argives in the fray.
- “ Protracted by our feuds no more,  
The war is quelled. So I abate  
Mine anger, and to Mars restore  
Him, whom the Trojan priestess bore,  
The grandchild of my hate.
- “ Him will I suffer to attain  
These realms of light, these blest abodes,  
The juice of nectar pure to drain,  
And be enrolled amid the train  
Of the peace-breathing gods.
- “ As long as the broad rolling sea  
Shall roar ’twixt Ilion and Rome,  
Where’er these wandering exiles be,  
There let them rule, be happy, free ;  
Whilst Priam’s, Paris’ tomb
- “ Is trodden o’er by roving kine,  
And wild beasts there securely breed,  
The Capitol afar may shine,  
And Rome, proud Rome, her laws assign  
Unto the vanquished Mede.

“ Yes, let her spread her name of fear,  
To farthest shores ; where central waves  
Part Africa from Europe, where  
Nile’s swelling current half the year  
The plains with plenty laves.

“ Still let her scorn to search with pain  
For gold, the earth hath wisely hid,  
Nor strive to wrest with hands profane  
To mortal use and mortal gain  
What is to man forbid.\*

“ Let earth’s remotest regions still  
Her conquering arms to glory call,  
Where scorching suns the long day fill,  
Where mists and snows and tempests chill  
Hold reckless bacchanal.

“ But let Quirinus’ sons beware,  
For they are doomed to sure annoy,  
Should they in foolish fondness e’er  
Or vaunting pride the homes repair  
Of their ancestral Troy.

“ In evil hour should Troy once more  
Arise, it shall be crushed anew,  
By hosts that o’er it stride in gore,  
By me conducted, as of yore,  
Jove’s spouse and sister too.

\* “ And with hands profane  
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth  
For treasures better hid.”



“Thrice rear a brazen wall, and though  
 Apollo’s self his aidance lent,  
 Thrice shall my Argives lay it low,  
 Thrice shall the captive wife in woe  
 Her lord and babes lament !”

But whither wouldst thou, Muse? Unmeet  
 For jocund lyre are themes like these.  
 Shalt thou the talk of gods repeat,  
 Debasing by thy strains effete  
 Such lofty mysteries ?



## ODE IV.

## TO CALLIOPE.

O QUEEN Calliope, from heaven descend,  
 And on the fife prolong  
 Thy descant sweet and strong,  
 Or with the lyre, if more it like thee, blend  
 Thy thrilling voice in song !

Hark ! Or is this but frenzy’s pleasing dream?  
 Through groves I seem to stray  
 Of consecrated bay,  
 Where voices mingle with the babbling stream,  
 And whispering breezes play.

When from my nurse erewhile on Vultur’s steep  
 I strayed beyond the bound  
 Of our small homestead’s ground,  
 Was I, fatigued with play, beneath a heap  
 Of fresh leaves sleeping found,

Strewn by the storied doves ; and wonder fell  
On all, their nest who keep  
On Acherontia's steep,  
Or in Forentum's low rich pastures dwell,  
Or Bantine woodlands deep ;

That safe from bears and adders in such place  
I lay, and slumbering smiled,  
O'erstrewn with myrtle wild  
And laurel, by the gods' peculiar grace  
No craven-hearted child.

Yours am I, O ye Muses, yours, whene'er  
The Sabine peaks I scale ;  
Or cool Præneste's vale,  
Or Tibur's slopes, or Baiæ's waters fair  
With happy heart I hail.

Unto your dances and your fountains vowed,  
Philippi's rout, the tree  
Of doom o'erwhelmed not me,  
Nor Palinurus 'mid the breakers loud  
Of the Sicilian sea.

Unshrinkingly, so you be only near,  
The Bosphorus I'll brave,  
Nor quail, howe'er it rave,  
Assyria's burning sands I'll dare, nor fear  
In them to find a grave.

Shielded by you, I'll visit Britain's shore  
To strangers ruthless ever,  
Front the Gelonian quiver,  
The Concan, too, who joys in horses' gore,  
And Scythia's icy river.

Unto great Cæsar's self ye lend new life  
In grot Pierian, when  
He has disposed his men  
Among the towns, to rest from battle-strife,  
And yearns for peace again.

From you flow gentle counsels, and most dear  
Such counsels are to you.  
We know, how He o'erthrew  
By His down-swooping bolts those monsters drear,  
The impious Titan crew;

Who doth the dull and sluggish earth control,  
The tempest-shaken main,  
Thronged towns, the realms of pain  
And gloom, and doth with even justice sole  
O'er gods and mortals reign.

When he beheld them first, these brothers stark,  
Proud in their strength of arm,  
Crowding in hideous swarm  
To pile up Pelion on Olympus dark,  
Jove shuddered with alarm.

But what could stout Typhœus, Mimas do?  
Or what, for all his might,  
Porphyryon's threatening height,  
What Prætus, or Enceladus, that threw  
Uprooted trees, in fight

Against great Pallas' ringing ægis dashed,  
What could they all essay?  
Here, eager for the fray,  
Stood Vulcan, there dame Juno unabashed,  
And he who ne'er doth lay

His bow aside, who laves his locks unshorn  
In Castaly's pure dew,  
Divine Apollo, who  
Haunts Lycia's woodland glades, in Delos born,  
In Patara worshipped too.

Unreasoning strength by its own weight must fall ; \*  
To strength with wisdom blent  
Force by the gods is lent,  
Who hold in scorn that strength, which is on all  
That's impious intent.

See hundred-handed Gyges helpless lie,  
To make my maxim good,  
Orion too, that would  
Lay ruffian hands on chaste Diana, by  
Her virgin shafts subdued.

Upheaved above the monsters she begot,  
Earth wails her children whirled  
To Orcus' lurid world,  
By vengeful bolts, and the swift fire hath not  
Pierced Ætna o'er it hurled.

Nor does the vulture e'er, sin's warder grim,  
Lewd Tityus' liver quit,  
But o'er him still doth sit ;  
Pirithous, too, lies fettered, limb to limb  
By chains three hundred knit.

\* " But what is strength without a double share  
Of wisdom? Vast, unweildy, burdensome,  
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall."

—*Samson Agonistes*, 53.

## ODE V.

## THE PRAISE OF VALOUR.

WHEN through the heavens his thunders blare,  
 We think that Jove is monarch there,  
 So now Augustus, too, shall be  
 Esteemed a present deity,  
 Since Britons he and Persians dread  
 Hath to his empire subjected.

Has any legionary, who  
 His falchion under Crassus drew,  
 A bride barbarian stooped to wed,  
 And life with her ignobly led?  
 And can there be the man so base  
 Of Marsian or Apulian race,  
 (Oh, on the Senate be the blame!  
 Oh, on our tainted morals shame!)  
 As with his spouse's sire, his foe,  
 And in a foeman's camp, to grow  
 To age beneath some Median king,  
 The shields no more remembering,  
 Nor yet the Roman dress or name,  
 Nor Vesta's never-dying flame,  
 Whilst still unscathed stands Jove, and Rome,  
 His city, and his only home?

Ah, well he feared such shame for us,  
 The brave, far-seeing Regulus,  
 When he the vile conditions spurned,  
 That might to precedent be turned,

With ruin and disaster fraught  
To after times, should they be taught  
Another creed than this—"They die  
Unwept, who brook captivity!"

"I've seen," he cried, "our standards hung  
In Punic fanes, our weapons wrung  
From Roman hands without a blow;  
Our citizens, I've seen them go,  
With arms behind their free backs tied,  
Gates I have seen flung open wide,  
Ay, Roman troops I've seen, disgraced  
To till the plains they had laid waste!"

"Will he return more brave and bold,  
The soldier you redeem with gold?  
You add but loss unto disgrace.  
Its native whiteness once efface  
With curious dyes; you can no more  
That whiteness to the wool restore:  
Nor is true valour, once debased,  
In souls corrupt to be replaced!"

"If from the tangled meshes freed,  
The stag will battle, then indeed  
May he conspicuous valour show,  
Who trusted the perfidious foe,—  
He smite upon some future field  
The Carthaginian, who could yield,  
In fear of death, his arms to be  
Bound up with thongs submissively!  
Content to draw his caitiff breath,  
Nor feel such life is worse than death!  
O shame! O mighty Carthage, thou  
On Rome's fallen glories towerest now!"

From his chaste wife's embrace, they say,  
And babes, he tore himself away,  
As he had forfeited the right  
To clasp them as a freeman might;  
Then sternly on the ground he bent  
His manly brow ; and so he lent  
Decision to the senate's voice,  
That paused and wavered in its choice,  
And forth the noble exile strode,  
Whilst friends in anguish lined the road.

Noble indeed ! for, though he knew  
What tortures that barbarian crew  
Had ripe for him, he waved aside  
The kin that did his purpose chide,  
The thronging crowds, that strove to stay  
His passage, with an air as gay,  
As though, at close of some decree  
Upon a client's lawsuit, he  
Its dreary coil were leaving there,  
To green Venafrum to repair,  
Or to Tarentum's breezy shore,  
Where Spartans built their town of yore.

## ODE VI.

TO THE ROMANS.

YE Romans, ye, though guiltless, shall  
 Dread expiation make for all  
 The laws your sires have broke,  
 Till ye repair with loving pains  
 The gods' dilapidated fanes,  
 Their statues grimed with smoke !

Ye rule the world, because that ye  
 Confess the gods' supremacy ;  
 Hence all your grandeur grows !  
 The gods, in vengeance for neglect,  
 Hesperia's wretched land have wrecked  
 Beneath unnumbered woes.

Twice have Monæses, and the hordes  
 Of Pacorus, withstood the swords  
 Of our ill-omened host ;  
 No more in meagre torques equipped,  
 But decked with spoils from Romans stripped,  
 They of our ruin boast.

Dacian and Ethiop have wellnigh  
 Undone our Rome, distracted by  
 Intestine feud and fray ;  
 This by his fleet inspiring fear,  
 That by his shafts, which, far and near,  
 Spread havoc and dismay.



Our times, in sin prolific, first  
The marriage-bed with taint have cursed,  
    And family and home ;  
This is the fountain-head of all  
The sorrows and the ills that fall  
    On Romans and on Rome.

The ripening virgin joys to learn  
In the Ionic dance to turn  
    And bend with plastic limb ;  
Still but a child, with evil gleams  
Incestuous love's unhallowed dreams  
    Before her fancy swim.

Straight, in her husband's wassail hours,  
She seeks more youthful paramours,  
    And little recks, on whom  
She may her lawless joys bestow  
By stealth, when all the lamps burn low,  
    And darkness shrouds the room.

Yea, she will on a summons fly,  
Nor is her spouse unconscious why,  
    To some rich broker's arms,  
Or some sea-captain's, fresh from Spain,  
With wealth to buy her shame, and gain  
    Her mercenary charms.

They did not spring from sires like these,  
The noble youth, who dyed the seas  
    With Carthaginian gore,  
Who great Antiochus o'ercame,  
And Pyrrhus, and the dreaded name  
    Of Hannibal of yore ;

But they, of rustic warriors wight  
The manly offspring, learned to smite  
    The soil with Sabine spade,  
And faggots they had cut to bear  
Home from the forest, whensoe'er  
    An austere mother bade ;

What time the sun began to change  
The shadows through the mountain range,  
    And took the yoke away  
From the o'er-wearied oxen, and  
His parting car proclaimed at hand  
    The kindest hour of day.

How Time doth in its flight debase  
Whate'er it finds! Our fathers' race,  
    More deeply versed in ill  
Than were their sires, hath borne us yet  
More wicked, duly to beget  
    A race more vicious still.

## ODE VII.

TO ASTERIÈ.

WHY weep, Asteriè, for the youth,  
 That soul of constancy and truth,  
 Whom from Bithynia's shore,  
 Rich with its wares, with gentle wing  
 The west winds shall in early spring  
 To thy embrace restore ?

Driven by the southern gales, when high  
 Mad Capra's star ascends the sky,  
 To Oricum, he keeps  
 Sad vigils through the freezing nights,  
 And, thinking of his lost delights  
 With thee, thy Gyges weeps.

Yet in a thousand artful ways  
 His hostess' messenger essays  
 To tempt him, urging how  
 Chloë—for such her name—is doomed  
 By fires like thine to be consumed,  
 And sigh as deep as thou ;

Narrating, how by slanders vile  
 A woman's falsehood did beguile  
 The credulous Prætus on,  
 To hurry, with untimely haste,  
 Into the toils of death the chaste,  
 Too chaste, Bellerophon.

Of Peleus then he tells, who thus  
Was nigh consigned to Tartarus,  
Because his coldness shamed  
Magnessia's queen Hippolytè,  
And hints at stories craftily  
To sap his virtue framed.

In vain ! For he, untouched as yet,  
Is deafer than the rocks that fret  
The Icarian waves ;—but thou,  
Keep watch upon thy fancy too,  
Nor to Enipeus there undue  
Attractiveness allow !

Though no one on the Martian Mead  
Can turn and wind a mettled steed  
So skilfully as he,  
Nor any breast the Tuscan tide,  
And dash its tawny waves aside  
With such celerity.

At nightfall shut your doors, nor then  
Look down into the street again,  
When quavering fifes complain ;  
And though he call thee, as he will,  
Unjust, unkind, unfeeling, still  
Inflexible remain !

## ODE VIII.

TO MÆCENAS.

WHY a bachelor such as myself should disport  
 On the Kalends of March, what these garlands  
 import,

What the censer with incense filled full, you inquire,  
 And the green turf, with charcoal laid ready to fire?  
 If the cause of all these preparations you seek,  
 You, versed in the lore both of Latin and Greek,  
 It is this! That I vowed, when nigh killed by the blow  
 Of yon tree, unto Liber a goat white as snow,  
 With festival rites; and the circling year now  
 Has brought round the day, that I offered my vow.  
 'Tis a day, which the well-rosined cork shall unyoke  
 Of the jar, that was set to be fined in the smoke,  
 When Tullius was Consul. In cups without end  
 Then pledge me, Mæcenas, for safe is thy friend;  
 Let the dawn find our lamps still ablaze, and afar  
 From our revel be anger, and clamour and jar!  
 Your cares for the weal of the city dismiss,  
 And why should you not, at a season like this?  
 There is Dacian Cotiso's army is shent,  
 And the Median by discords intestine is rent;  
 The vanquished Cantabrian, yonder in Spain,  
 Submits, after long years of strife, to our chain,  
 And the Scythians, unbending their bows in despair,  
 To fly from the plains they have ravaged prepare.  
 Then a respite from public anxieties steal,  
 Feel the easy indifference private men feel,  
 Snatch gaily the joys which the moment shall bring,  
 And away every care and perplexity fling.

## ODE IX.

## THE RECONCILIATION.

HORACE.

WHILST I was dear and thou wert kind,  
 And I, and I alone might lie  
 Upon thy snowy breast reclined,  
 Not Persia's king so blest as I.

LYDIA.

Whilst I to thee was all in all,  
 Nor Chloë might with Lydia vie,  
 Renowned in ode or madrigal,  
 Not Roman Ilia famed as I.

HORACE.

I now am Thracian Chloë's slave,  
 With hand and voice that charms the air,  
 For whom even death itself I'd brave,  
 So fate the darling girl would spare!

LYDIA.

I dote on Calais—and I  
 Am all his passion, all his care,  
 For whom a double death I'd die,  
 So fate the darling boy would spare!

HORACE.

What, if our ancient love return,  
 And bind us with a closer tie,  
 If I the fair-haired Chloë spurn,  
 And as of old for Lydia sigh?

LYDIA.

Though lovelier than yon star is he,  
 Thou fickle as an April sky,  
 More churlish, too, than Adria's sea,  
 With thee I'd live, with thee I'd die!

—o—

ODE X.

TO LYCÈ.

**T**HOUGH your drink were the Tanais, chilliest of rivers,  
 And your lot with some conjugal savage were cast,  
 You would pity, sweet Lycè, the poor soul that shivers  
 Out here at your door in the merciless blast.

Only hark how the doorway goes straining and creaking,  
 And the piercing wind pipes through the trees that surround  
 The court of your villa, while black frost is streaking  
 With ice the crisp snow that lies thick on the ground!

In your pride—Venus hates it—no longer envelop ye,  
 Or haply you'll find yourself laid on the shelf;  
 You never were made for a prudish Penelope,  
 'Tis not in the blood of your sires or yourself.

Though nor gifts nor entreaties can win a soft answer,  
 Nor the violet pale of my love-ravaged cheek,  
 Though your husband be false with a Greek ballet-dancer,  
 And you still are true, and forgiving, and meek,

Yet be not as cruel—forgive my upbraiding—  
 As snakes, nor as hard as the toughest of oak ;  
 Think, to stand out here, drenched to the skin, serenading  
 All night may in time prove too much of a joke.



## ODE XI.

TO LYDÈ.

O HERMES, taught by whom Amphion's throat  
 Charmed into motion stones and senseless things,  
 And thou sweet shell, that dost with dulcet note  
 Make music from thy seven melodious strings,

Thou once nor sweet, nor voluble, but now  
 In fane, or rich man's feast, a welcome guest,  
 Give to my song the charmer's might, to bow  
 Lydè's unyielding ear, and unrelenting breast!

Lydè, who, like a filly full of play,  
 That frisks and gambols o'er the meadows wide,  
 And fears e'en to be touched, will never stay  
 To list the burning tale that woos her for a bride.

Thou listening woods canst lead, and tigers fell,  
 And stay the rapid rivers in their course ;  
 Yea, the grim janitor of ghastly hell  
 Crouched on his post, subdued by thy persuasive force ;



Though countless serpents—sentinels full dread—  
The ridges of his fateful brows empale,  
And, loathly steaming, from his triple head  
Swelters black gore, and poisonous blasts exhale.

E'en Tityus and Ixion grimly smiled  
Through all their anguish, and a while hung dry  
The toiling urn, whilst the sweet strain beguiled  
The Danaids, that stood in soothed oblivion by.

In Lydè's ear reverberate their guilt,  
And its dread punishment, to draw for ever  
A jar of water that is ever spilt,  
Through the pierced bottom lost in the sad-flowing river.

Show her the vengeance sure, howe'er delayed,  
Which even in Orcus crimes like theirs must feel,  
Those impious girls, stained with guilt's blackest shade,  
Those impious girls, who slew their lords with savage steel!

One only, worthy of the bridal bed,  
Of all the train, was to her perjured sire  
Magnificently false, and fame shall spread  
Her praise through endless time, linked to the living lyre.

“Rise, rise!” Thus to her youthful mate she spoke,  
“Lest thou from hands, whose guilt is little feared,  
Receive a sleep that never shall be broke!  
Fly from my father false and ruthless sisters weird!

“Who now, like lions ravening o'er their prey,  
Butcher their wedded lords, alas, alas!  
I strike thee not—I, gentler-souled than they,  
Nor keep thee prisoned here, but bid thee freely pass.

“ My sire may load my arms with cruel chains,  
 Because in pity I my lord did spare,  
 Or o'er the seas to far Numidia's plains  
 May banish me, yet all for thee I'll gladly bear !

“ Go ! speed thee hence, unfurl thy swelling sail,  
 While Venus favours, and this midnight gloom !  
 The gods defend thy steps ! And let the tale  
 Of what I loved and lost be graven upon thy tomb !



ODE XII.

TO NEOBULE.

POOR maids to love's promptings  
 May never give play,  
 Nor wash in the wine-cup  
 Their troubles away ;  
 More dead than alive,  
 They are haunted by fear  
 To be scourged by the tongue  
 Of a guardian austere.

Cytherea's winged urchin  
 From thee doth beguile  
 Thy work-box, and Hebrus  
 Of Lipara's isle  
 From thy broidery weans thee,  
 And all the hard lore,  
 Which thou, Neobule,  
 Didst toil at of yore.

A handsome young fellow  
Is he, when he laves  
His balm-dropping shoulders  
In Tiber's dun waves;  
Bellerophon's self  
Not so well graced a steed,  
He is peerless in boxing,  
A racehorse in speed;

Expert, too, in striking  
The stag with his spear,  
When the herd o'er the champaign  
Fly panting in fear;  
Nor less ready handed  
The boar to surprise,  
Where deep in the shade  
Of the covert it lies.

## ODE XIII.

TO THE BANDUSIAN FOUNT.

O FOUNTAIN of Bandusia's dell,  
 Than crystal clearer, that of wine  
 Art worthy, and of flowers as well,  
 To-morrow shall be thine

A kid, whose horns just budding, drea  
 Of love and battles both ! In vain !  
 For the young rake thy gelid stream  
 With ruddy gore shall stain.

Gainst flaming Sirius' fury thou  
 Art proof, and grateful cool dost yield  
 To oxen wearied with the plough,  
 And flocks that range afield.

Thou too shalt rank with springs renowned,  
 I singing, how from umbrage deep  
 Of caverned rocks, with ilex crowned,  
 Thy babbling waters leap.

## ODE XIV.

TO THE ROMANS.

CÆSAR, O people, who of late,  
 Like Hercules defying fate,  
 Was said the laurel to have sought  
 Which only may by death be bought,  
 To his home-gods returns again  
 Victorious from the shores of Spain !

To the just gods to pay their rites,  
 Now let the matron, who delights  
 In him, her peerless lord, repair,  
 And our great leader's sister fair ;  
 And with them go the mothers chaste,  
 Their brows with suppliant fillets graced,  
 Of our fresh maids, and of the brave  
 Young men, who late have 'scaped the grave !  
 And, O ye boys, and new-made brides,  
 Hush every word that ill betides !

From me this truly festal day  
 Shall drive each cloud of care away ;  
 Nor shall I draw in fear my breath  
 For civil broil or bloody death,  
 While Cæsar sway o'er earth shall bear.  
 Away, then, boy, bring chaplets fair,  
 Bring unguents, and with these a jar,  
 That recollects the Marsian war,

If aught that held the juice of grape  
 Might roving Spartacus escape!  
 Neæra, too, that singer rare,  
 Go, bid her quickly bind her hair,  
 Her myrrhy hair, in simple knot,  
 And haste to join me on the spot!  
 But if her porter say thee nay,  
 The hateful churl! then come away.  
 Time-silvered locks the passions school,  
 And make the testiest brawler cool;  
 I had not brooked his saucy prate,  
 When young, in Plancus' consulate.



## ODE XV.

TO CHLORIS.

QUIT, quit, 'tis more than time, thou wife  
 Of Ibycus the pauper,  
 Thy horribly abandoned life  
 And courses most improper!

Ripe for the grave, 'mongst girls no more  
 Attempt to sport thy paces,  
 Nor fling thy hideous shadow o'er  
 Their pure and starry graces.

What charmingly on Pholoë sits  
 In Chloris must repel us:  
 Thy daughter better it befits  
 To hunt up the young fellows.

Like Mænad, by the timbrel made  
 Of all restraint oblivious,  
 She by her love for Nothus swayed  
 Like she-goat frisks lascivious.

To spin Luceria's fleeces suits  
 A crone like thee; no patience  
 Can brook thy roses, and thy lutes,  
 And pottle-deep potations.



## ODE XVI.

TO MÆCENAS.

WELL the tower of brass, the massive doors, the watch-  
 dogs' dismal bay  
 Had from midnight woers guarded Danaë, where immured  
 she lay;  
 There she might have pined a virgin, prisoned by the timorous  
 craft  
 Of her fated sire Acrisius, had not Jove and Venus laughed  
 At his terrors, for no sooner changed the god to gold, than he  
 Instantly unto the maiden access found secure and free.

Through close lines on lines of sentries gold to cleave its  
 way delights,  
 Stronger than the crashing lightning through opposing rocks  
 it smites;  
 'Twas through vile desire of lucre, as the storied legends tell,  
 That the house of Argos' augur whelmed in death and ruin fell;

'Twas by bribes the Macedonian city's gates could open fling,  
 'Twas by bribes that he subverted many a dreaded rival king ;  
 Nay, there lies such fascination in the gleam of gold to some,  
 That our bluffest navy-captains to its witchery succumb.

But as wealth into our coffers flows in still increasing store,  
 So, too, still our care increases, and the hunger still for more,\*  
 Therefore, O Mæcenas, glory of the knights, with righteous  
 dread,

Have I ever shrunk from lifting too conspicuously my head.  
 Yes, the more a man, believe me, shall unto himself deny,  
 So to him shall the Immortals bounteously the more supply.  
 From the ranks of wealth deserting, I, of all their trappings  
 bare,

To the camp of those who covet nought that pelf can bring  
 repair,

More illustrious as the master of my poor despisèd hoard,  
 Than if I should be reputed in my garners to have stored  
 All the fruits of all the labours of the stout Apulian boor,  
 Lord belike of wealth unbounded, yet as veriest beggar poor.

In my crystal stream, my woodland, though its acres are  
 but few,

And the trust that I shall gather home my crops in season due,  
 Lies a joy, which he may never grasp, who rules in gorgeous  
 state

Fertile Africa's dominions. Happier, happier far my fate!  
 Though for me no bees Calabrian store their honey, nor doth  
 wine

Sickening in the Læstrygonian amphora for me refine ;  
 Though for me no flocks unnumbered, browsing Gallia's pas-  
 tures fair,

Pant beneath their swelling fleeces, I at least am free from care ;

\* "And store of cares doth follow riches' store."

—*Fairy Queen*, VI. ix. 21.



Haggard want with direful clamour ravins never at my door,  
Nor wouldst thou, if more I wanted, O my friend, deny me  
more.

Appetites subdued will make me richer with my scanty gains,  
Than the realms of Alyattes wedded to Mygdonia's plains.  
Much will evermore be wanting unto those who much demand ;  
Blest, whom Jove with what sufficeth dowers, but dowers with  
sparing hand.



## ODE XVII.

TO AELIUS LAMIA.

**A**ELIUS, sprung from Lamos old,  
That mighty king, who first, we're told,  
Ruled fortified Formiæ,  
And all the land on either hand,  
Where Liris by Marica's strand  
Goes rippling to the sea ;

Unless yon old soothsaying crow  
Deceive me, from the East shall blow  
To-morrow such a blast,  
As will with leaves the forests strew,  
And heaps of useless algæ too  
Upon the sea-beach cast.

Dry faggots, then, house while you may ;  
Give all your household holiday  
To-morrow, and with wine  
Your spirits cheer ; be blithe and bold,  
And on a pigling two moons old  
Most delicately dine !

## ODE XVIII.

TO FAUNUS.

**F**AUNUS, lover of the shy  
 Nymphs who at thy coming fly,  
 Lightly o'er my borders tread,  
 And my fields in sunshine spread,  
 And, departing, leave me none  
 Of my yeanling flock undone!  
 So each closing year shall see  
 A kidling sacrificed to thee;  
 So shall bounteous bowls of wine,  
 Venus' comrades boon, be thine;  
 So shall perfumes manifold  
 Smoke around thine altar old!

When December's Nones come round,  
 Then the cattle all do bound  
 O'er the grassy plains in play;  
 The village, too, makes holiday,  
 With the steer from labour freed  
 Sporting blithely through the mead.  
 'Mongst the lambs, who fear him not,  
 Roves the wolf; each sylvan spot  
 Showers its woodland leaves for thee,  
 And the delver, mad with glee,  
 Joys with quick-redoubling feet  
 The detested ground to beat.

## ODE XIX.

TO TELEPHUS.

HOW long after Inachus Codrus bore sway there  
 In Greece, for whose sake he so gallantly fell,  
 Every scion of Æacus' race, every fray there  
 Beneath holy Troy's leaguered walls you can tell.

But the price one may purchase choice old Chian wine at,  
 Or who has good baths, that you never have told,  
 Nor where we shall find pleasant chambers to dine at,  
 And when be secure from Pelignian cold.

To the new moon a cup, boy, to midnight another,  
 And quickly,—to augur Muræna a third!  
 To each bowl give three measures, or nine,—one or t'other  
 Will do, less or more would be wrong and absurd!

The bard, who is vowed to the odd-numbered Muses,  
 For bumpers thrice three in his transport will call;  
 But the Grace with her loose-kirtled sisters refuses  
 To grant more than three in her horror of brawl.

For me, I delight to go mad for a season!  
 Why ceases the shrill Berecynthian flute  
 To pour its bewailings? And what is the reason  
 The lyre and the flageolet yonder hang mute?

I hate niggard hands; then strew freely the roses!  
 Let envious Lycus there hear the mad din,  
 And she, our fair neighbour, who with him reposes;  
 That she with old Lycus should live is a sin.

Thee, Telephus, thee, with thy thick-flowing tresses  
 All radiant as Hesper at fall of the day,  
 Sweet Rhodè is longing to load with caresses,  
 Whilst I waste for Glycera slowly away!



ODE XX.

TO PYRRHUS.

WHAT man is he so mad, as dare  
 From Moorish lioness to tear  
 Her cubs? My Pyrrhus, dost not see  
 How perilous the task must be?  
 Soon, soon thy heart will fail, and thou  
 Wilt shun the strife awaits thee now;  
 When through the youths, that throng to stay  
 Her course, she fiercely makes her way,  
 To find Nearchus, peerless youth:  
 Oh rare the struggle, small the ruth,  
 Till one or other yields, and he  
 Her prize, or thine, at last shall be!

Meanwhile, as for the frenzied fair  
 Thou dost thy deadliest shafts prepare,  
 And she whets her appalling teeth,  
 The umpire of the fray beneath  
 His heel, so gossip says, will crush  
 The palm, and spread, to meet the rush  
 Of breezes cool, the odorous hair  
 That clusters round his shoulders fair,  
 Like Nireus he, or whom of yore  
 Jove's bird from watery Ida bore!

## ODE XXI.

TO A JAR OF WINE.

**O** PRECIOUS crock, whose summers date,  
 Like mine, from Manlius' consulate,  
 I wot not whether in your breast  
 Lie maudlin wail or merry jest,  
 Or sudden choler, or the fire  
 Of tipsy Love's insane desire,  
 Or fumes of soft caressing sleep,  
 Or what more potent charms you keep,  
 But this I know, your ripened power  
 Befits some choicely festive hour!  
 A cup peculiarly mellow  
 Corvinus asks; so come, old fellow,  
 From your time-honoured bin descend,  
 And let me gratify my friend!  
 No churl is he, your charms to slight,  
 Though most intensely erudite:  
 And even old Cato's worth, we know,  
 Took from good wine a nobler glow.

Your magic power of wit can spread  
 The halo round a dullard's head,  
 Can make the sage forget his care,  
 His bosom's inmost thoughts unbare,  
 And drown his solemn-faced pretence  
 Beneath your blithesome influence.  
 Bright hope you bring and vigour back  
 To minds outworn upon the rack,

And put such courage in the brain,  
 As makes the poor be men again,  
 Whom neither tyrants' wrath affrights,  
 Nor all their bristling satellites.

Bacchus, and Venus, so that she  
 Bring only frank festivity,  
 With sister Graces in her train,  
 Twining close in lovely chain,  
 And gladsome tapers' living light,  
 Shall spread your treasures o'er the night,  
 Till Phœbus the red East unbars,  
 And puts to rout the trembling stars.



ODE XXII.

TO DIANA.

**H**AIL, guardian maid  
 Of mount and forest glade,  
 Who, thrice invoked, dost bow  
 Thine ear, and sendest aid  
 To girls in labour with the womb,  
 And snatchest them from an untimely tomb,  
 Goddess three-formèd thou!

I consecrate as thine  
 This overhanging pine,  
 My villa's shade ;  
 There, as my years decline,  
 The blood of boar so young, that he  
 Dreams only yet of sidelong strokes, by me  
 Shall joyfully be paid!

## ODE XXIII.

TO PHIDYLE.

IF thou, at each new moon, thine upturned palms,  
 My rustic Phidyle, to heaven shalt lift,  
 The Lares soothe with steam of fragrant balms,  
 A sow, and fruits new-plucked, thy simple gift ;

Nor venom'd blast shall nip thy fertile vine,  
 Nor mildew blight thy harvest in the ear ;  
 Nor shall thy flocks, sweet nurselings, peak and pine,  
 When apple-bearing Autumn chills the year.

The victim marked for sacrifice, that feeds  
 On snow-capped Algidus, in leafy lane  
 Of oak and ilex, or on Alba's meads,  
 With its rich blood the pontiff's axe may stain ;

Thy little gods for humbler tribute call  
 Than blood of many victims ; twine for them  
 Of rosemary a simple coronal,  
 And the lush myrtle's frail and fragrant stem.

The costliest sacrifice that wealth can make  
 From the incens'd Penates less commands  
 A soft response, than doth the poorest cake,  
 If on the altar laid with spotless hands.

## ODE XXIV.

TO THE COVETOUS.

**T**HOUGH thou, of wealth possessed  
 Beyond rich Ind's, or Araby's the blest,  
 Shouldst with thy palace keeps  
 Fill all the Tuscan and Apulian deeps,  
 If Fate, that spoiler dread,  
 Her adamantine bolts drive to the head,  
 Thou shalt not from despairs  
 Thy spirit free, nor loose thy head from death's dark snares.

The Scythians of the plains  
 More happy are, housed in their wandering wains,  
 More blest the Getan stout,  
 Who not from acres marked and meted out  
 Reaps his free fruits and grain :  
 A year, no more, he rests in his domain,  
 Then, pausing from his toil,  
 He quits it, and in turn another tills the soil.

The guileless stepdame there  
 The orphan tends with all a mother's care ;  
 No dowried dame her spouse  
 O'erbears, or trust the sleek seducer's vows ;  
 Her dower a blameless life,  
 True to her lord, she shrinks an unstained wife  
 Even from another's breath ;  
 To fall is there a crime, and there the guerdon death !



Oh for the man, would stay  
Our gory hands, our civil broils allay!  
If on his statutes he  
SIRE OF THE COMMON-WEAL proclaimed would be,  
Let him not fear to rein  
Our wild licentiousness, content to gain  
From after-times renown,  
For ah! while Virtue lives, we hunt her down,  
And only learn to prize  
Her worth, when she has passed for ever from our eyes!

What boots it to lament,  
If crime be not cut down by punishment?  
What can vain laws avail,  
If life in every moral virtue fail?  
If nor the clime, that glows,  
Environed round by fervid heats, nor snows  
And biting Northern wind,  
Which all the earth in icy cerements bind,  
The merchant back can keep,  
And skilful shipmen flout the horrors of the deep?

Yes! Rather than be poor,  
What will not mortals do, what not endure?  
Such dread disgrace to shun,  
From virtue's toilsome path away we run.  
Quick, let us, 'mid the roar  
Of crowds applauding to the echo, pour  
Into the Capitol,  
Or down into the nearest ocean roll  
Our jewels, gems, and gold,  
Dire nutriment of ills and miseries untold!

If with sincere intent  
We would of our iniquities repent,

Uprooted then must be  
The very germs of base cupidity,  
And our enervate souls  
Be braced by manlier arts for nobler goals !  
The boy of noble race  
Can now not sit his steed, and dreads the chase,  
But wields with mastery nice  
The Grecian hoop, or even the law-forbidden dice !

What marvel, if the while  
His father, versed in every perjured wile,  
For vilest private ends  
Defrauds his guests, his partners, and his friends,  
His pride, his only care,  
To scramble wealth for an unworthy heir !  
They grow, his ill-got gains,  
But something still he lacks, and something ne'er attains !

## ODE XXV.

TO BACCHUS.

**W**HITHER, whither, full of thee,  
 Bacchus, dost thou hurry me?  
 Say, what groves are these I range,  
 Whirled along by impulse strange,  
 What the caves, through which I fly?  
 Tell me, in what grot shall I  
 Swell illustrious Cæsar's praise,  
 Striving to the stars to raise  
 Worth that worthy is to shine  
 In Jove's council-hall divine?

I a strain sublime shall pour,  
 Ne'er by mortal sung before.  
 As the Eviad, from some height,  
 Sleepless through the livelong night,  
 With a thrill of wild amaze  
 Hebrus at his feet surveys,  
 Thrace, enwrapped in snowy sheet,  
 Rhodope by barbarous feet  
 Trodden, so where'er I rove  
 Far from human haunts, the grove,  
 Rock, and crag, and woodland height  
 Charm me with a wild delight.

O thou, who dost the Naiads, and  
 The Bacchanalian maids command,  
 Whose hands uproot, such strength have they,  
 Ash-trees with storms of ages grey,

No mean, no mortal theme is mine,  
 Nor less my numbers than divine !  
 Though perilous, 'tis glorious too,  
 O great Lenæus, to pursue  
 The god, who round his forehead twines  
 Leaves gathered freshly from the vines !

—o—

ODE XXVI.

TO VENUS.

I'VE had of late a host of loves afoot,  
 And triumphs too might brag of more than one,  
 But now I hang up here my arms and lute,  
 With the fatigues of the campaign fordone.

Quick, quick! Beside them pile here on the wall,  
 That to the left doth sea-born Venus guard,  
 Links, crowbars, hatchets, bows, the terrors all  
 Of doors, that were to my beseechings barred!

Thou, of fair Cyprus who queen goddess art,  
 And Memphis, which no Thracian snows enwrap,  
 Wave high thy scourge, appal proud Chloe's heart,  
 And give her—just one little tiny tap.\*

\* Landor had this last verse in view in the following poem:—

“ So late removed from him she swore,  
 With clasping arms and vows and tears,  
 In life and death she would adore,  
 While memory, fondness, bliss endears.

“ Can she forswear, can she forget?  
 Strike, mighty Love! Strike, Vengeance! Soft!  
 Conscience must come, and bring regret:  
 These let her feel! . . . Nor these too oft!”

## ODE XXVII.

TO GALATEA, GOING TO SEA.

LET omens dire the bad attend,  
 Who would upon a journey wend,—  
 The bitch in whelp, the screeching owl,  
 The dun she-wolf upon her prowl  
 Of hunger from Lanuvium's rocks,  
 And, worse than all, the pregnant fox!  
 At other times, their course to break,  
 With sudden spring a nimble snake  
 Will cross the roadway like a dart,  
 And make their carriage-horses start!  
 I, with my sage forecasting skill,  
 For her I love and fear for will,  
 By my strong pray'rs' resistless force,  
 Call from the East the raven hoarse,  
 Ere, scenting rain at hand, again  
 It seeks its haunts amid the fen.

Go! and be happy, wheresoe'er  
 Thou go'st, and me in memory bear,  
 Fair Galatea! Boding jay  
 Nor vagrant crow doth bar thy way.  
 But see, with what a troubled glare  
 Orion's star is setting there!  
 Trust me! I've wrestled with the gales  
 Of Hadria's gulf; could tell thee tales  
 Would scare thee, of the mischief, too,  
 Which smooth-lipped western winds can do.  
 Let our foes' wives, and all their kind,  
 Feel rising Auster's fury blind,

And shudder at black ocean's roar,  
What time it smites the trembling shore.  
Like thee, Europa her fair side  
Did to the treacherous bull confide,  
But found her courage fail, when she  
Beheld the monsters of the sea ;  
She who at morning's prime had strayed,  
Culling fair flowers from field and glade,  
A votive coronal to twine  
For the close-neighbouring wood-nymphs' shrine,  
When night fell round saw nothing, save  
The stars and weltering ocean-wave.

Soon as she touched the Cretan ground,  
For five-score cities fair renowned,  
"How, O my sire !" did she exclaim,  
"Have I foregone a daughter's name?  
Slave to mad passion, how have I  
Broke every holy filial tie?  
Whence have I come, and whither flown?  
One death is worthless to atone  
For guilt like mine, so base, so deep!  
Wake I, and have I cause to weep?  
Or is my soul yet free from stain,  
And these but phantoms of the brain,  
Mere incorporeal films of dream,  
Which through Sleep's ivory portal stream?"

"Oh madness, to have left my home,  
To deem it happier, thus to roam  
Yon weary waste of waters blue,  
Than gather flowers that freshly grew!  
If any to my rage should now  
Yield that wild bull, this steel I vow,  
Should hew him down before me here,  
And break his horns, though late so dear.

Shameless my father's hearth I fled!  
Shameless I shrink from Orcus dread!  
Place me, ye gods, in righteous wrath,  
Naked upon the lions' path,  
Or give me, ere grief's wasting might  
The bloom upon my cheeks shall blight,  
And sap my blood's warm tide away,  
To be the hungry tigers' prey!

“Why, vile Europa, linger? Why?  
I hear my absent father cry.  
Quick, hang thee on yon ash! Thy zone  
Will serve thee—*that* is still thine own;  
Or if yon cliff delight thee more,  
These death-edged rocks, that strew the shore,  
Then to the driving tempest give  
Thyself, unless thou'dst rather live  
A bondslave, carding servile wool,  
'Neath some barbarian princess' rule,  
And brook, though sprung of royal race,  
A vulgar concubine's disgrace!”

As thus she poured her wail on high,  
Venus the while stood laughing by,  
And to her side, with bow unstrung,  
Her boy, the rosy Cupid, clung.  
When she of mirth her fill had ta'en,  
“This boiling rage,” she cried, “restrain,  
Since yon detested bull shall bend  
His horns for thee at will to rend.  
Know'st not, thou art Jove's honoured bride?  
Then dry thy tears, and own with pride  
Thy mighty fortune, mightier fame,  
For half the globe shall bear thy name!”

## ODE XXVIII.

TO LYDE.

**W**HAT goodlier or fitter plan  
 Have I for Neptune's festal day?  
 Then forth the hoarded Cæcuban,  
 My Lydè, bring without delay,  
 And for a season, if you can,  
 Fling wisdom's sober saws away!

You see the waning light decay,  
 And yet you pause and hesitate,—  
 As though the day its flight would stay,—  
 To pluck down from its cellared state  
 The amphora, was stored away  
 In Bibulus's consulate.

In alternating strains shall we  
 Sing Neptune, and the deep-green hair  
 Of Nereids sporting through the sea;  
 And thou on curvèd lyre with fair  
 Latona, and the shafts so free  
 Of Cynthia, shalt enchant the air.

And she, who Cnidos makes her care,  
 And dwells amidst the Cyclads bright,  
 And doth to Paphos oft repair  
 With team of swans for her delight,  
 Shall have our closing song; and rare  
 Shall be our hymn in praise of Night.



## ODE XXIX.

TO MÆCENAS.

SCION of Tuscan kings, in store  
 I've laid a cask of mellow wine,  
 That never has been broached before.  
 I've roses, too, for wreaths to twine,  
 And Nubian nut, that for thy hair  
 An oil shall yield of fragrance rare.

Then linger not, but hither wend!  
 Nor always from afar survey  
 Dank Tibur's leafy heights, my friend,  
 The sloping lawns of Æsula,  
 And mountain peaks of Circe's son,  
 The parricidal Telegon.

The plenty quit, that only palls,  
 And, turning from the cloud-capped pile,  
 That towers above thy palace halls,  
 Forget to worship for a while  
 The privileges Rome enjoys,  
 Her smoke, her splendour, and her noise.

It is the rich who relish best  
 To dwell at times from state aloof,  
 And simple suppers, neatly dressed,  
 Beneath a poor man's humble roof,  
 With neither pall nor purple there,  
 Have smoothed ere now the brow of care.

See, now Andromeda's bright sire  
Reveals his erewhile hidden rays,  
Now Procyon flames with fiercest fire,  
Mad Leo's star is all ablaze,  
For the revolving sun has brought  
The season round of parching drought.

Now with his spent and languid flocks  
The wearied shepherd seeks the shade,  
The river cool, the shaggy rocks,  
That overhang the tangled glade,  
And by the stream no breeze's gush  
Disturbs the universal hush.

Thou dost devise with sleepless zeal  
What course may best the state beseem,  
And, fearful for the City's weal,  
Weigh'st anxiously each hostile scheme,  
That may be hatching far away  
In Scythia, India, or Cathay.

Most wisely Jove in thickest night  
The issues of the future veils,  
And laughs at the self-torturing wight,  
Who with imagined terrors quails.  
The present only is thine own,  
Then use it well, ere it has flown.

All else which may by time be bred  
Is like a river of the plain,  
Now gliding gently o'er its bed  
Along to the Etruscan main,  
Now whirling onwards, fierce and fast,  
Uprooted trees, and boulders vast,

And flocks, and houses, all in drear  
 Confusion tossed from shore to shore,  
 While mountains far, and forests near  
 Reverberate the rising roar,  
 When lashing rains among the hills  
 To fury wake the quiet rills.

Lord of himself that man will be,  
 And happy in his life alway,  
 Who still at eve can say with free  
 Contented soul, "I've lived to-day!\*"  
 Let Jove to-morrow, if he will,  
 With blackest clouds the welkin fill,

"Or flood it all with sunlight pure,  
 Yet from the past he cannot take  
 Its influence, for that is sure,  
 Nor can he mar, or bootless make  
 Whate'er of rapture and delight  
 The hours have borne us in their flight."

Fortune, who with malicious glee  
 Her merciless vocation plies,  
 Benignly smiling now on me,  
 Now on another, bids him rise,

\* "To-morrow I will live, the fool doth say;  
 To-day itself's too late, the wise lived yesterday."

—MARTIAL, B. V. 59.

"Life for delays and doubts no time does give,  
 None ever yet made haste enough to live."

—*Id.* B. II. 50. *Translated by Cowley.*  
*Essay on Procrastination.*

"Ah, fill the cup! What boots it to repeat  
 How Time is slipping underneath our feet:  
 Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday,  
 Why fret about them, if To-day be sweet?"

—OMAR KHAYAM.

And in mere wantonness of whim  
Her favours shifts from me to him.

I laud her, whilst by me she holds,  
But if she spread her pinions swift,  
I wrap me in my virtue's folds,\*  
And yielding back her every gift,  
Take refuge in the life so free  
Of bare but honest poverty.

You will not find me, when the mast  
Groans 'neath the stress of southern gales,  
To wretched pray'rs rush off, nor cast  
Vows to the great gods, lest my bales  
From Tyre or Cyprus sink, to be  
Fresh booty for the hungry sea.

When others then in wild despair  
To save their cumbrous wealth essay,  
I to the vessel's skiff repair,  
And, whilst the Twin Stars light my way,  
Safely the breeze my little craft  
Shall o'er the Ægean billows waft.

\* " And evermore himself with comfort feeds  
Of his own virtues and praiseworthy deeds."

—*Fairy Queen*, II. vii. 2.

## ODE XXX.

TO MELPOMENE.

I 'VE reared a monument, my own,  
 More durable than brass,  
 Yea, kingly pyramids of stone  
 In height it doth surpass.

Rain shall not sap, nor driving blast  
 Disturb its settled base,  
 Nor countless ages rolling past  
 Its symmetry deface.

I shall not wholly die. Some part,  
 Nor that a little, shall  
 Escape the dark Destroyer's dart,  
 And his grim festival.

For long as with his Vestals mute  
 Rome's Pontifex shall climb  
 The Capitol, my fame shall shoot  
 Fresh buds through future time.

Where brawls loud Aufidus, and came  
 Parched Daunus erst, a horde  
 Of rustic boors to sway, my name  
 Shall be a household word;

As one who rose from mean estate,  
The first with poet fire  
Æolic song to modulate  
To the Italian lyre.

Then grant, Melpomene, thy son  
Thy guerdon proud to wear,  
And Delphic laurels, duly won,  
Bind thou upon my hair!

THE ODES

BOOK IV.





## BOOK IV.

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### ODE I.

#### THE PAINS OF LOVE.

ALTERED FROM BEN JONSON.

VENUS, dost thou renew a fray  
Long intermitted? Spare me, spare, I pray!  
I am not such as in the reign  
Of the good Cinara I was. Refrain,  
Sweet Love's sour mother, him to school,  
Whom lustres ten have hardened to thy rule,  
And soft behests; and hie thee where  
Youth calls to thee with many a fondling prayer!  
More fitly—if thou seek to fire  
A bosom apt for love and young desire—  
Come, borne by bright-winged swans, and thus  
Revel in the house of Paulus Maximus;  
Since, noble, and of graces choice,  
For troubled clients voluble of voice,  
And lord of countless arts, afar  
Will he advance the banners of thy war.  
And when he shall with smiles behold  
His native charms eclipse his rival's gold,  
He will thyself in marble rear,  
Beneath a cedarn roof near Alba's mere.  
There shall thy dainty nostril take  
In many a gum, and for thy soft ear's sake

Shall verse be set to harp and lute,  
And Phrygian hautboy, not without the flute.  
There twice a-day, in sacred lays,  
Shall youths and tender maidens sing thy praise ;  
And thrice in Salian manner beat  
The ground in cadence with their ivory feet.  
Me neither damsel now, nor boy  
Delights, nor credulous hope of mutual joy ;  
Nor glads me now the deep carouse,  
Nor with dew-dropping flowers to bind my brows.  
But why, oh why, my Ligurine,  
Flow my thin tears down these poor cheeks of mine ?  
Or why, my well-graced words among,  
With an uncomely silence fails my tongue ?  
I dream, thou cruel one, by night,  
I hold thee fast ; anon, fled with the light,  
Whether in Field of Mars thou be,  
Or Tiber's rolling streams, I follow thee.

## ODE II.

TO IULUS ANTONIUS.

IULUS, he who'd rival Pindar's fame  
 On waxen wings doth sweep  
 The Empyréan steep,  
 To fall like Icarus, and with his name  
 Endue the glassy deep.

Like to a mountain stream, that roars  
 From bank to bank along,  
 When autumn rains are strong,  
 So deep-mouthed Pindar lifts his voice, and pours  
 His fierce tumultuous song.

Worthy Apollo's laurel wreath,  
 Whether he strike the lyre  
 To love and young desire,  
 While bold and lawless numbers grow beneath  
 His mastering touch of fire ;

Or sings of gods, and monarchs sprung  
 Of gods, that overthrew  
 The Centaurs, hideous crew,  
 And, fearless of the monster's fiery tongue,  
 The dread Chimæra slew ;

Or those the Eléan palm doth lift  
 To heaven, for wingèd steed,  
 Or sturdy arm decreed,  
 Giving, than hundred statues nobler gift,  
 The poet's deathless mead ;

Or mourns the youth snatched from his bride,  
Extols his manhood clear,  
And to the starry sphere  
Exalts his golden virtues, scattering wide  
The gloom of Orcus drear.

When the Dircéan Swan doth climb  
Into the azure sky,  
There poised in ether high,  
He courts each gale, and floats on wing sublime,  
Soaring with steadfast eye.

I, like the tiny bee, that sips  
The fragrant thyme, and strays  
Humming through leafy ways,  
By Tibur's sedgy banks, with trembling lips  
Fashion my toilsome lays.

But thou, when up the sacred steep  
Cæsar, with garlands crowned,  
Leads the Sicambrians bound,  
With bolder hand the echoing strings shalt sweep,  
And bolder measures sound.

Cæsar, than whom a nobler son  
The Fates and Heaven's kind powers  
Ne'er gave this earth of ours,  
Nor e'er will give, though backward time should run  
To its first golden hours.

Thou, too, shalt sing the joyful days,  
The city's festive throng,  
When Cæsar, absent long,  
At length returns,—the Forum's silent ways  
Serene from strife and wrong.

Then, though in statelier power it lack,  
 My voice shall swell the lay,  
 And sing, "O glorious day,  
 O day thrice blest, that gives great Cæsar back  
 To Rome, from hostile fray!"

"Io Triumphe!" thrice the cry;  
 "Io Triumphe!" loud  
 Shall shout the echoing crowd  
 The city through, and to the gods on high,  
 Raise incense like a cloud.

Ten bulls shall pay thy sacrifice,  
 With whom ten kine shall bleed:  
 I to the fane will lead  
 A yearling of the herd, of modest size,  
 From the luxuriant mead,

Horned like the moon, when her pale light,  
 Which three brief days have fed,  
 She trimmeth, and, dispread  
 On his broad brows a spot of snowy white,  
 All else a tawny red.\*

\* "The glory of the herd, a bull  
 Snow-white, save 'twixt his horns one spot there grew;  
 Save that one stain, he was of milky hue."

—SHAKESPEARE.

## ODE III.

TO MELPOMENE.

THE man whom thou, dear Muse of song,  
 Didst at his birth regard with smiling calm,  
 Shall win no glory in the Isthmian throng,  
 From lusty wrestlers bearing off the palm,  
 Nor ever, reining steeds of fire, shall he  
 In swift Achaian car roll on victoriously.

Nor him shall warfare's stern renown,  
 Nor baffled menaces of mighty kings,  
 Bear to the Capitol with laurel crown;  
 But streams that kiss with gentle murmurings  
 Rich Tibur's vale,—thick wood, and mossy brake,  
 Him of the Æolian lyre shall worthy master make.

At Rome, of all earth's cities queen,  
 Men deign to rank me in the noble press  
 Of bards beloved of man; and now, I ween,  
 Doth envy's rancorous tooth assail me less.  
 O thou loved Muse, who temperest the swell  
 And modulated noise of the sweet golden shell!

O thou who canst at will endow  
 Mute fish with swanlike voices soft and sweet,  
 'Tis all thy gift, that, as they pass me now,  
 Men point me to their fellows on the street,  
 As lord and chief of Roman minstrelsy;  
 Yes, that I sing and please, if please, is due to thee.

## ODE IV.

## THE PRAISES OF DRUSUS.

**L**IKE as the thunder-bearing bird  
 (On whom o'er all the fowls of air  
 Dominion was by Jove conferred,  
 Because with loyal care  
 He bore away to heaven young Ganymede the fair),  
  
 Whom native vigour and the rush  
 Of youth have spurred to quit the nest,  
 And skies of blue in springtide's flush  
 Entice aloft to breast  
 The gales he feared before his lordly plumes were drest,  
  
 Now swooping, eager for his prey,  
 Spreads havoc through the fluttered fold,—  
 Straight, fired by love of food and fray,  
 In grapple fierce and bold  
 The struggling dragons rends even in their rocky hold:  
  
 Or like the lion's whelp, but now  
 Weaned from his tawny mother's side,  
 By tender kidling on the brow  
 Of some green slope espied,  
 Whose unfleshed teeth she knows will in her blood be dyed;  
  
 So dread, so terrible in war  
 Our noble Drusus showed, when through  
 The Rhætian Alpine glens afar  
 His conquering eagles flew,  
 And swiftly the appalled Vindelici o'erthrew.

Whence came their custom—in the night  
 Of farthest time it flourished there—  
 With Amazonian axe to fight,  
 To question I forbear ;  
 Nor anything to know, may any mortal dare ;

But this I know ; their hosts, that still,  
 Where'er they came, victorious fought,  
 In turn by that young hero's skill  
 Revanquished, have been taught  
 To feel what marvels may of enterprise be wrought

By valiant heart and vigorous head,  
 In home auspicious trained to power,  
 What by the noble spirit fed  
 In Nero's sons by our  
 Augustus, who on them a father's care did shower.

'Tis of the brave and good alone  
 That good and brave men are the seed ;\*  
 The virtues, which their sires have shown,  
 Are found in steer and steed ;  
 Nor do the eagles fierce the gentle ringdove breed.

Yet training quickens power inborn,  
 And culture nerves the soul for fame ;  
 But he must live a life of scorn,  
 Who bears a noble name,  
 Yet blurs it with the soil of infamy and shame.

What thou, Rome, dost the Neros owe,  
 Let dark Metaurus' river say,

\* " O worthiness of nature, breed of greatness !  
 Cowards father cowards, and base things the base."



And Asdrubal, thy vanquished foe,  
And that auspicious day,  
Which through the scattered gloom broke forth with smiling  
ray.

When joy again to Latium came,  
Nor longer through her towns at ease  
The fatal Lybian swept, like flame  
Among the forest trees,  
Or Eurus' headlong gust across Sicilian seas.

Thenceforth, for with success they toiled,  
Rome's youth in vigour waxed amain,  
And temples, ravaged and despoiled,  
By Punic hordes profane,  
Upraised within their shrines beheld their gods again.

Till spoke false Hannibal at length ;  
" Like stags, of ravening wolves the prey,  
Why rush to grapple with their strength,  
From whom to steal away  
The loftiest triumph is, they leave for us to-day?

" That race, inflexible as brave,  
From Ilium quenched in flames, who bore  
Across the wild Etruscan wave  
Their babes, their grandsires hoar,  
And all their sacred things, to the Ausonian shore ;

" Like oak, by sturdy axes lopped  
Of all its boughs, which once the brakes  
Of shaggy Algidus o'ertopped,  
Its loss its glory makes,  
And from the very steel fresh strength and spirit takes.

“Not Hydra, cleft through all its trunk,  
With fresher vigour waxed and spread,  
Till even Alcides’ spirit shrunk;  
Nor yet hath Colchis dread,  
Or Echionean Thebes more fatal monster bred.

“In ocean plunge it, and more bright  
It rises; scatter it, and lo!  
Its unscathed victors it will smite  
With direful overthrow,  
And Rome’s proud dames shall tell of many a routed foe.

“No messengers in boastful pride  
Shall I to Carthage send again;  
Our every hope, it died, it died,  
When Asdrubal was slain,  
And with his fall our name’s all-conquering star did wane.”

No peril, but the Claudian line  
Will front and master it, for they  
Are shielded by Jove’s grace divine,  
And counsels sage always  
Their hosts through war’s rough paths successfully convey!

## ODE V.

TO AUGUSTUS.

FROM gods benign descended, thou  
 Best guardian of the fates of Rome,  
 Too long already from thy home  
 Hast thou, dear chief, been absent now ;

Oh, then return, the pledge redeem,  
 Thou gav'st the Senate, and once more  
 Its light to all the land restore ;  
 For when thy face, like springtide's gleam,

Its brightness on the people sheds,  
 Then glides the day more sweetly by,  
 A brighter blue pervades the sky,  
 The sun a richer radiance spreads !

As on her boy the mother calls,  
 Her boy, whom envious tempests keep  
 Beyond the vexed Carpathian deep,  
 From his dear home, till winter falls,

And still with vow and prayer she cries,  
 Still gazes on the winding shore,  
 So yearns the country evermore  
 For Cæsar, with fond, wistful eyes.

For safe the herds range field and fen,  
 Full-headed stand the shocks of grain,  
 Our sailors sweep the peaceful main,  
 And man can trust his fellow-men.

No more adulterers stain our beds,  
Laws, morals, both that taint efface,  
The husband in the child we trace,  
And close on crime sure vengeance treads.

The Parthian, under Cæsar's reign,  
Or icy Scythian, who can dread,  
Or all the tribes barbarian bred  
By Germany, or ruthless Spain?

Now each man, basking on his slopes,  
Weds to his widowed trees the vine,  
Then, as he gaily quaffs his wine,  
Salutes thee God of all his hopes;

And prayers to thee devoutly sends,  
With deep libations; and, as Greece  
Ranks Castor, and great Hercules,  
Thy godship with his Lares blends.

Oh, mayst thou on Hesperia shine,  
Her chief, her joy, for many a day!  
Thus, dry-lipped, thus at morn we pray,  
Thus pray at eve, when flushed with wine.

## ODE VI.

IN PRAISE OF APOLLO AND DIANA.

**T**HOU god, who art potent that tongue to chastise,  
 Which e'er by its vaunts the Immortals defies,  
 As well the sad offspring of Niobe knew,  
 And Tityus, profanest of ravishers, too,  
 And Phthian Achilles, who wellnigh o'ercame  
 Proud Troy, of all warriors the foremost in fame,  
 Yet ne'er with thyself to be matched; for though he  
 Was begotten of Thetis, fair nymph of the sea,  
 And shook the Dardanian turrets with fear,  
 As he crashed through the fray with his terrible spear,  
 Like a pine, by the biting steel struck and down cast,  
 Or cypress o'erthrown by the hurricane blast,  
 Far prostrate he fell, and in Teucrican dust  
 His locks all dishevelled ignobly were thrust.  
 He would not, shut up in the horse, that was feigned  
 To be vowed to the rites of Minerva, have deigned  
 In their ill-timed carouse on the Trojans to fall,  
 When the festival dance gladdened Priam's high hall;  
 No! He to the captives remorseless,—oh shame!  
 In the broad face of day to Greek faggot and flame  
 Their babes would have flung, yea, as ruthless a doom  
 Would have wreaked upon those who still slept in the womb,  
 If won by sweet Venus' entreaties and thine,  
 The Sire of the Gods, with a bounty benign,  
 A City had not to Æneas allowed,  
 To stand through the ages triumphant and proud!  
 Thou, who taught'st keen Thalia the plectrum to guide,  
 Thou, who lavest thy tresses in Xanthus's tide,

O beardless Agyieus, uphold, I implore,  
The fame of the Daunian Muse evermore,  
For 'twas thou didst inspire me with poesy's flame,  
Thou gav'st me the art of the bard, and his name!

Ye virgins, the foremost in rank and in race,  
Ye boys, who the fame of your ancestry grace,  
Fair wards of the Delian goddess, whose bow  
Lays the swift-footed lynx and the antelope low,  
To the Lesbian measure keep time with your feet,  
And sing in accord with my thumb in its beat;  
Hymn the son of Latona in cadence aright,  
Hymn duly the still-waxing lamp of the night,  
That with plentiful fruitage the season doth cheer,  
And speeds the swift months on to girdle the year!

And thou, who art chief of the chorus to-day,  
Soon borne home a bride in thy beauty shalt say,  
"When the cyclical year brought its festival days,  
My voice led the hymn of thanksgiving and praise,  
So sweet, the Immortals to hear it were fain,  
And 'twas Horace the poet who taught me the strain!"

## ODE VII.

TO TORQUATUS.

THE snows have fled, and to the meadows now  
 Returns the grass, their foliage to the trees :  
 Earth dons another garb, and dwindling low  
 Between their wonted banks the rivers seek the seas.

The Graces with the Nymphs their dances twine,  
 Their beauties all unbosomed to the air ;  
 Read in the shifting year, my friend, a sign,  
 That change and death attend all human hope and care.

Winter dissolves beneath the breath of Spring,  
 Spring yields to Summer, which shall be no more,  
 When Autumn spreads her fruits thick-clustering,  
 And then comes Winter back,—bleak, icy-dead, and hoar.

But moons revolve, and all again is bright :\*  
 We, when we fall, as fell the good and just  
 Æneas, wealthy Tullus, Ancus wight,  
 Are but a nameless shade, and some poor grains of dust.

\* Mr. Yonge, in his edition of Horace, has called attention to the way in which Young, in his 'Night Thoughts,' Night 6, uses the same thought in aid of his plea for man's immortality :—

“ Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all :  
 All change, no death ; day follows night, and night  
 The dying day ; stars rise and set and rise.  
 Earth takes the example. See the Summer, gay  
 With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flowers,  
 Droops into pallid Autumn : Winter grey,  
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,

Who knows, if they, who all our Fates control,  
Will add a morrow to thy brief to-day?  
Then think of this—What to a friendly soul  
Thy hand doth give shall 'scape thine heir's rapacious sway.

When thou, Torquatus, once hast vanished hence,  
And o'er thee Minos' great decree is writ,  
Nor ancestry, nor fire-lipped eloquence,  
Nor all thy store of wealth to give thee back were fit.

For even Diana from the Stygian gloom  
Her chaste Hippolytus no more may gain,  
And dear Pirithous must 'bide his doom,  
For Theseus' arm is frail to rend dark Lethe's chain.

Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away,  
Then melts into the Spring : Soft Spring, with breath  
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south  
Recalls the first. All, to reflowerish, fades ;  
As in a wheel all sinks to reascend.  
Emblems of man who passes, not expires."

" Mark the winds, and mark the skies,  
Ocean's ebb and ocean's flow ;  
Sun and moon but set to rise,  
Round and round the seasons go."

—BURNS.



## ODE VIII.

TO MARCUS CENSORINUS.

CUPS on my friends I would freely bestow,  
 Dear Censorinus, and bronzes most rare,  
 Tripods carved richly, in Greece long ago  
 The guerdons of heroes, for them I would spare ;

Nor should the worst of my gifts be thine own,  
 If in my household art's marvels were rife,  
 Hero or god, wrought by Scopas in stone,  
 Or by Parrhasius coloured to life.

But unto me no such dainties belong,  
 Neither of them hast thou any dearth ;  
 Song is thy joy, I can give thee a song,  
 Teach, too, the gift's all unmatchable worth.

Not marbles graven with glorious scrolls  
 Penned by a nation with gratitude due,  
 Records, in which our great warriors' souls  
 Tameless by death ever flourish anew !

Not flying enemies, no, nor with shame  
 Hannibal's menaces back on him hurled,  
 Not fraudulent Carthage expiring in flame,  
 Blazon his glory more bright to the world,

His surname from Africa vanquished who drew,  
 Than doth the Calabrian Muse by its lays :  
 And how, if your feats be unsung of, will you  
 Reap the full guerdon of life-giving praise ?

What were great Mavors, and Ilia's son,  
 Had envious silence his merits suppressed ?  
 Styx's dark flood had o'er Æacus run,  
 But song bore him on to the Isles of the Blest.

Dowered by the Muse with a home in the sky,  
 Ne'er can he perish, whom she doth approve :  
 Dauntless Alcides thus revels on high,  
 Guest at the coveted banquets of Jove.

So the Twin Stars, as through tempests they glow,  
 Save the spent seaman, when most he despairs ;  
 Bacchus, with vine leaves fresh garlanded, so  
 Brings to fair issues his votary's pray'rs.



ODE IX.

TO LOLLIIUS.

NEVER deem they must perish, the verses, which I,  
 Who was born where the waters of Aufidus roar,  
 To the chords of the lyre with a cunning ally  
 Unknown to the bards of my country before !

Though Mæonian Homer unrivalled may reign,  
 Yet are not the Muses Pindaric unknown,  
 The threats of Alcæus, the Ceian's sad strain,  
 And stately Stesichorus' lordlier tone.

Unforgot is the sportive Anacreon's lay,  
 Still, still sighs the passion, unquenched is the fire,  
 Which the Lesbian maiden, in days far away,  
 From her love-laden bosom breathed into the lyre.

Not alone has Lacænian Helena's gaze  
    Been fixed by the gloss of a paramour's hair,  
By vestments with gold and with jewels ablaze,  
    By regal array, and a retinue rare;

Nor did Teucer first wield the Cydonian bow,  
    Nor was Troy by a foe but once harassed and wrung;  
Nor Idomeneus only, or Sthenelus show  
    Such prowess in war as deserved to be sung;

Nor yet was redoubtable Hector, nor brave  
    Deiphobus first in the hard-stricken field  
By the dint of the strokes, which they took and they gave,  
    Their babes and the wives of their bosom to shield.

Many, many have lived, who were valiant in fight,  
    Before Agamemnon; but all have gone down,  
Unwept and unknown, in the darkness of night,  
    For lack of a poet to hymn their renown.

Hidden worth differs little from sepulchred ease.\*  
    But, Lollius, thy fame in my pages shall shine;  
I will not let pale-eyed Forgetfulness seize  
    These manifold noble achievements of thine.

Thou, my friend, hast a soul, by whose keen-sighted range  
    Events afar off in their issues are seen,  
A soul, which maintains itself still through each change  
    Of good or ill fortune erect and serene.

\* " For if our virtues  
    Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
    As though we had them not."

—*Measure for Measure*, Act I. Sc. 2.

Of rapine and fraud the avenger austere,  
To wealth and its all-snaring blandishments proof,  
The Consul art thou not of one single year,  
But as oft as a judge, from all baseness aloof,

Thou hast made the expedient give place to the right,  
And flung back the bribes of the guilty with scorn,  
And on through crowds warring against thee with might  
Thy far-flashing arms hast triumphantly borne.

Not him, who of much that men prize is possessed,  
Mayst thou fitly call "blest;" he may claim to enjoy  
More fitly, more truly, the title of "blest,"  
Who wisely the gifts of the gods can employ;—

Who want, and its hardships, and slights can withstand,  
And shrinks from disgrace as more bitter than death,  
Not he for the friends whom he loves, or the land  
Of his fathers will dread to surrender his breath.

## ODE X.

TO A CRUEL BEAUTY.

AH, cruel, cruel still,  
 And yet divinely fair,  
 When Time with fingers chill  
 Shall thin the wavy hair,  
 Which now in many a wanton freak  
 Around thy shoulders flows,  
 When fades the bloom, which on thy cheek  
 Now shames the blushing rose ;

Ah, then as in thy glass  
 Thou gazest in dismay,  
 Thou'lt cry, "Alas ! alas !  
 Why feel I not to-day,  
 As in my maiden bloom, when I  
 Unmoved heard lovers moan,  
 Or, now that I would win them, why  
 Is all my beauty flown ?"

## ODE XI.

TO PHYLLIS.

I HAVE laid in a cask of Albanian wine,  
 Which nine mellow summers have ripened and more ;  
 In my garden, dear Phyllis, thy brows to entwine,  
 Grows the brightest of parsley in plentiful store.

There is ivy to gleam on thy dark glossy hair ;  
 My plate, newly burnished, enlivens my rooms ;  
 And the altar, athirst for its victim, is there,  
 Enwreathed with chaste vervain, and choicest of blooms.

Every hand in the household is busily toiling,  
 And hither and thither boys bustle and girls ;  
 Whilst, up from the hearth-fires careering and coiling,  
 The smoke round the rafter-beams languidly curls.

Let the joys of the revel be parted between us !  
 'Tis the Ides of young April, the day which divides  
 The month, dearest Phyllis, of ocean-sprung Venus,  
 A day to me dearer than any besides.

And well may I prize it, and hail its returning—  
 My own natal day not more hallowed nor dear—  
 For Mæcenas, my friend, dates from this happy morning  
 The life which has swelled to a lustrous career.

You sigh for young Telephus : better forget him !  
 His rank is not yours, and the gaudier charms  
 Of a girl that's both wealthy and wanton benet him,  
 And hold him the fondest of slaves in her arms.

Remember fond Phaëton's fiery sequel,  
 And heavenward-aspiring Bellerophon's fate ;  
 And pine not for one who would ne'er be your equal,  
 But level your hopes to a lowlier mate.

So, come, my own Phyllis, my heart's latest treasure,—  
 Ah, ne'er for another this bosom shall long,—  
 And I'll teach, while your loved voice re-echoes the measure,  
 How to lighten fell care by the cadence of song.



## ODE XII.

## TO VIRGIL.

**N**OW the soft gales of Thrace, that sing peace to the  
 ocean,

Spring's handmaids, are wafting the barks from the shore,  
 There is life in the meads, in the groves there is motion,  
 And snow-swollen torrents are raving no more.

Now buildeth her nest, whilst for Itys still sadly  
 She mourns, the poor bird, who was fated to shame  
 The line of old Cecrops for ever, by madly  
 Avenging the brutal barbarian's flame.

On the young grass reclined, near the murmur of fountains,  
 The shepherds are piping the songs of the plains,  
 And the god, who loves Arcady's purple-hued mountains,  
 The God of the Flocks, is entranced by their strains.

And thirst, O my Virgil, comes in with the season;  
But if you'd have wine from the Calian press,  
You must lure it from me by some nard,—and with reason,—  
Thou favourite bard of our youthful noblesse.

Yes, a small box of nard from the stores of Sulpicius  
A cask shall elicit, of potency rare  
To endow with fresh hopes, dewy-bright and delicious,  
And wash from our hearts every cobweb of care.

If you'd dip in such joys, come—the better, the quicker!—  
But remember the fee—for it suits not my ends,  
To let you make havoc, scot-free, with my liquor,  
As though I were one of your heavy-pursed friends.

To the winds with base lucre and pale melancholy!—  
In the flames of the pyre these, alas! will be vain,  
Mix your sage ruminations with glimpses of folly,—  
'Tis delightful at times to be somewhat insane!



## ODE XIII.

TO LYCÈ.

LYCÈ, the gods have heard my prayer,  
 The gods have heard your ill-used lover,  
 You still would be thought both young and fair,  
 But you've lost your looks, and your heyday's over :  
 You may tipsily wanton, and quaver, and trill,  
 But the love you would waken will slumber on still.

In the dimples of Chia's fair cheek he lies,  
 Chia that lilts to her lyre so sweetly ;  
 From crab-trees insipid and old he flies,  
 And you, Lycè, you he forswears completely ;  
 For your teeth don't keep, and your wrinkles are deep,  
 And your forehead is snow-capped, and rugged, and steep.

Not purple of Cos, nor gems star-bright,  
 Can recall the days that are gone and going ;  
 Oh, where is the bloom and the smile of light,  
 And the step of grace, self-poised and flowing ?  
 What of her, in whose breath was love's flame, is left,  
 Of her, who my soul of itself bereft ?

Thou to Cinara next for charm of face,  
 And love-luring wiles on my heart wert graven ;  
 But Cinara died in her youth's fresh grace,  
 Whilst thou art like to outlive the raven,  
 Dying down, a spent torch, into ashes and smoke,  
 The butt of each roysterer's joke !

## ODE XIV.

TO AUGUSTUS.

**H**OW shall the Fathers, how  
 Shall the Quiritians, O Augustus, now,  
 Intent their honours in no niggard wise  
 Upon thee to amass,  
 By storied scroll, or monumental brass  
 Thy virtues eternise?

O thou who art, wherever shines the sun  
 On lands where man a dwelling-place hath won,  
 Of princes greatest far,  
 Thee the Vindelici, who ever spurned  
 Our Latian rule, of late have learned  
 To know supreme in war!

For 'twas with soldiers thou hadst formed,  
 That Drusus, greatly resolute,  
 On many a hard-won field o'erthrew the wild  
 Genaunians, and the Brenni fleet of foot,  
 And all their towering strongholds stormed,  
 On Alps tremendous piled.

Anon to deadliest fight  
 The elder Nero pressed,  
 And, by auspicious omens blessed,  
 Scattered the giant Rhætian hordes in flight.  
 Himself, that glorious day,  
 The foremost in the fray,

With havoc dire did he  
O'erwhelm that banded crowd  
Of hearts in stern devotion vowed  
To die or to be free!  
Like Auster, lashing into ire  
The tameless ocean-waves, when through  
The driving rack the Pleiad choir  
Flash suddenly in view,  
So furiously he dashed  
Upon his serried foes,  
And where the balefires thickest rose,  
With foaming war-steed crashed.

As bull-shaped Aufidus, who laves  
Apulian Daunus' realm,  
Is whirled along, when o'er his banks  
He eddies and he raves,  
Designing to o'erwhelm  
The cultured fields with deluge and dismay,  
So Claudius swept the iron ranks  
Of the barbarian host,  
And where from van to rear he clove his way,  
Along his track the mangled foemen lay,  
Nor did one squadron lost  
The lustre dim of that victorious fray.

But thine the legions were, and thine  
The counsels, and the auspices divine,  
For on the self-same day,  
That suppliant Alexandria had flung  
Her port and empty palace wide to thee,  
Did Fortune, who since then through lustres three  
Had to thy banners smiling clung,  
Bring our long wars to a triumphant close,  
And for thee proudly claim

The honour long desired, the glorious fame  
Of countless vanquished foes,  
And vanquished empires bowed in homage to thy sway!

Thee the Cantabrian, unsubdued till now,  
The Mede, the Indian,—thee  
The Scythian roaming free,  
Unwedded to a home,  
With wondering awe obey,  
O mighty Cæsar, thou  
Of Italy and sovereign Rome  
The present shield, the guardian, and the stay!  
Thee Nile, who hides from mortal eyes  
The springs where he doth rise,  
Thee Ister, arrowy Tigris thee,  
Thee, too, the monster-spawning sea,  
Which round far Britain's islands breaks in foam,  
Thee Gallia, whom no form of death alarms,  
Iberia thee, through all her swarms  
Of rugged warriors, hears;  
Thee the Sicambrian, who  
Delights in carnage, too,  
Now laying down his arms,  
Submissively reveres!

## ODE XV.

TO AUGUSTUS.

TO vanquished town and battle fray  
 I wished to dedicate my lay,  
 When Phœbus smote his lyre, and sang,  
 And in his strain this warning rang :  
 "Spread not your tiny sails to sweep  
 The surges of the Tyrrhene deep !"

Thy era, Cæsar, which doth bless  
 Our plains anew with fruitfulness,  
 Back to our native skies hath borne  
 Our standards from the temples torn  
 Of haughty Parthia, and once more,  
 The hurricane of warfare o'er,  
 Hath closed Quirinian Janus' fane,  
 On lawless licence cast a rein,  
 And, purging all the land from crime,  
 Recalled the arts of olden time ;  
 Those arts, by which the name and power  
 Of Italy grew hour by hour,  
 And Rome's renown and grandeur spread  
 To sunrise from Sol's western bed.

While Cæsar rules, no civil jar,  
 Nor violence our ease shall mar,  
 Nor rage, which swords for carnage whets,  
 And feuds 'twixt hapless towns begets.  
 The Julian Edicts who shall break ?  
 Not they, who in the Danube slake

Their thirst, nor Serican, nor Gete,  
Nor Persian, practised in deceit,  
Nor all the ruthless tribes, beside  
The Danube's darkly-rolling tide.

And we, on working days and all  
Our days of feast and festival,  
Shall with our wives and children there,  
Approaching first the Gods in prayer,  
Whilst jovial Bacchus' gifts we pour,  
Sing, as our fathers sang of yore,  
To Lybian flutes, which answer round,  
Of chiefs for mighty worth renowned,  
Of Troy, Anchises, and the line  
Of Venus evermore benign!

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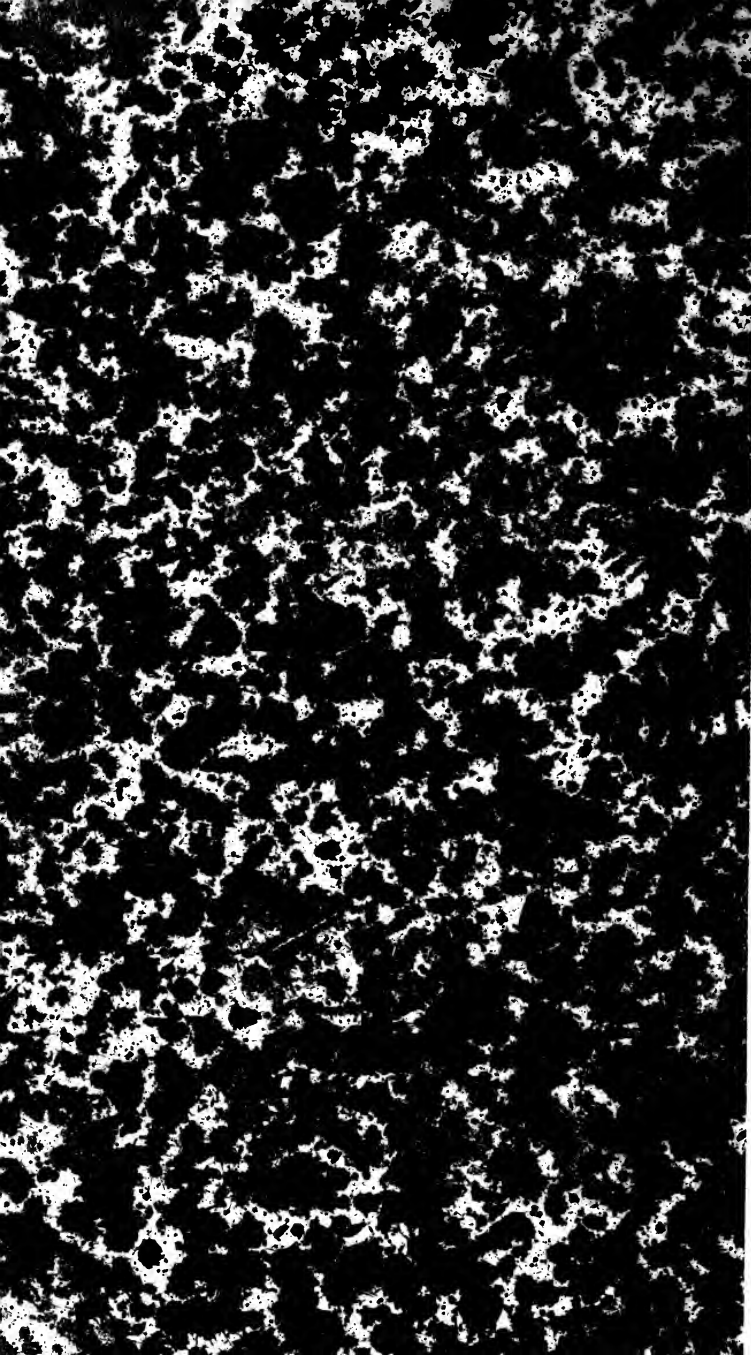
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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.









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